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THE
DOMESTIC SANCTUARY



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Presented to Mrs. Christie
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June 29th 1883



THE

DOMESTIC SANCTUARY;

OR,

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY
RELIGION.

BY

J. LANCELEY.
"

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
THE REV. SAMUEL D. RICE, D. D.
FEMALE COLLEGE, HAMILTON.

"The church in the house." —PAUL.



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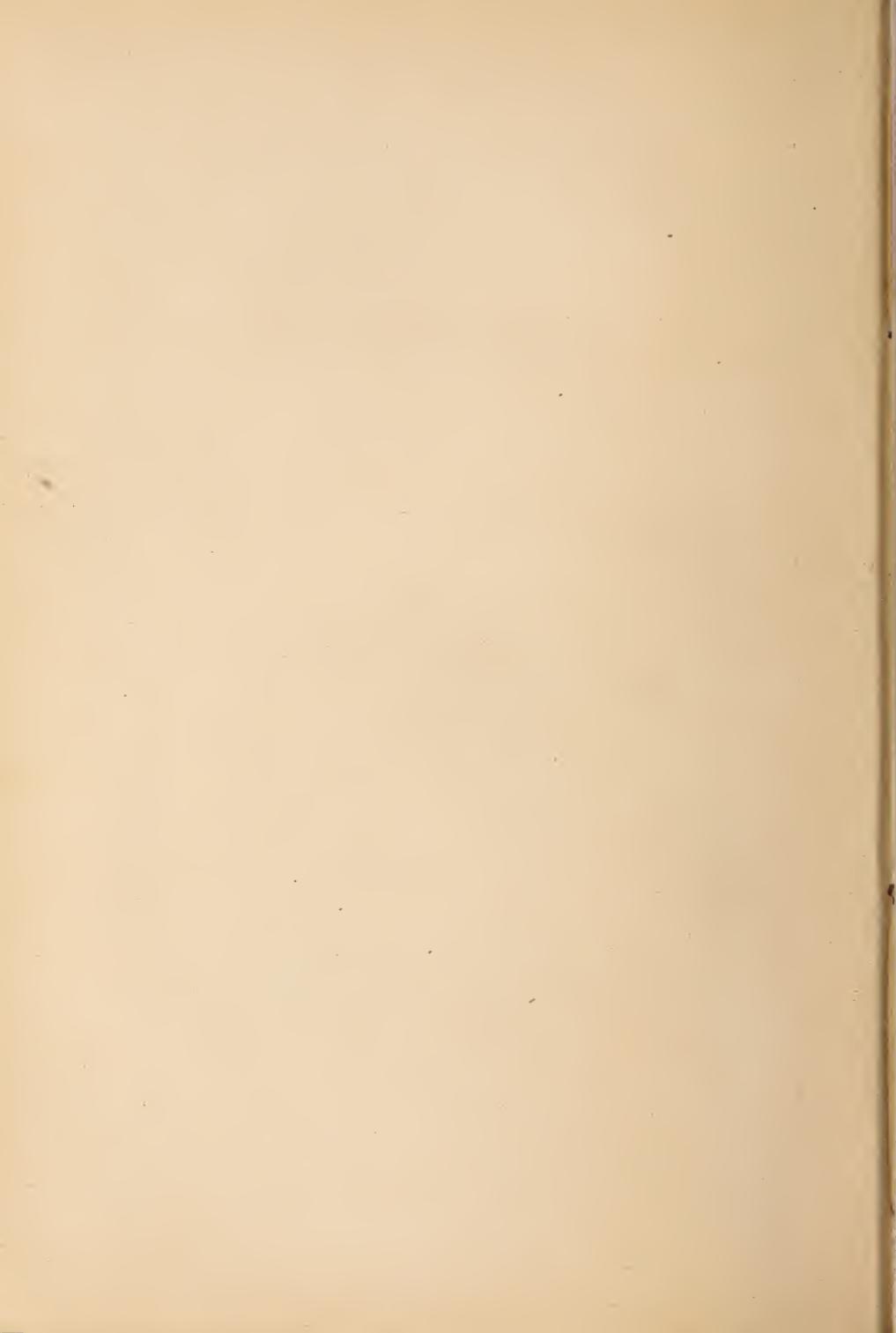
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INTRODUCTION.

I have been requested, by its author, to write an introduction to this little book.

Could I say anything to give it currency, could I induce people to buy the book and read on this most important subject, most cheerfully would I use my influence to do so. Mr. Lanceley may well claim to have had the best opportunity for preparation in this department of thought. Not exempt, in any way, from the lot of heavy labor, nor free from severe trial in personal suffering, he has prepared a very large family for active life, and with unusual success. If "every event must have a cause," then, in the life and characters of those so prepared, are to be found the teachings, the discipline, and example of other years. Mr. Lanceley will tell you from whence he drew the knowledge he sought to communicate, and the inspiration for the work; the motives by which he was actuated, and the great responsibility which

led him to pursue his daily work of governing, teaching, guiding, repressing and encouraging, as the varied circumstances might require. Exposed as childhood life is, in these times, to all the falsities in thought, and impropriety of conduct, so rife in all circles of society, to have no exception in this circle to mar the record of loving childhood and respectful maturity, of filial and fraternal love, of unity and earnestness of purpose in meeting life's claims, and of a deep and permanent regard for those duties that flow from a correct apprehension of their relations to God, must give a thrill of deepest joy to parental affection, and declare the value of the facts and methods of home life. Most parents think they can govern other people's children admirably, and are very free in their criticisms on those of other people; but their own! oh, *they* have such dispositions!

The life of the family is cared for only in christian countries, and with exceedingly rare exception can "home" be used in any but christian lands. Our inference, therefore, is that under christian teachings alone, are those qualities found that form the bond of christian households. The result must be, that the only "rule of faith and practice" is the word of authority, whose teachings can guide to such great results. No one can over-estimate the

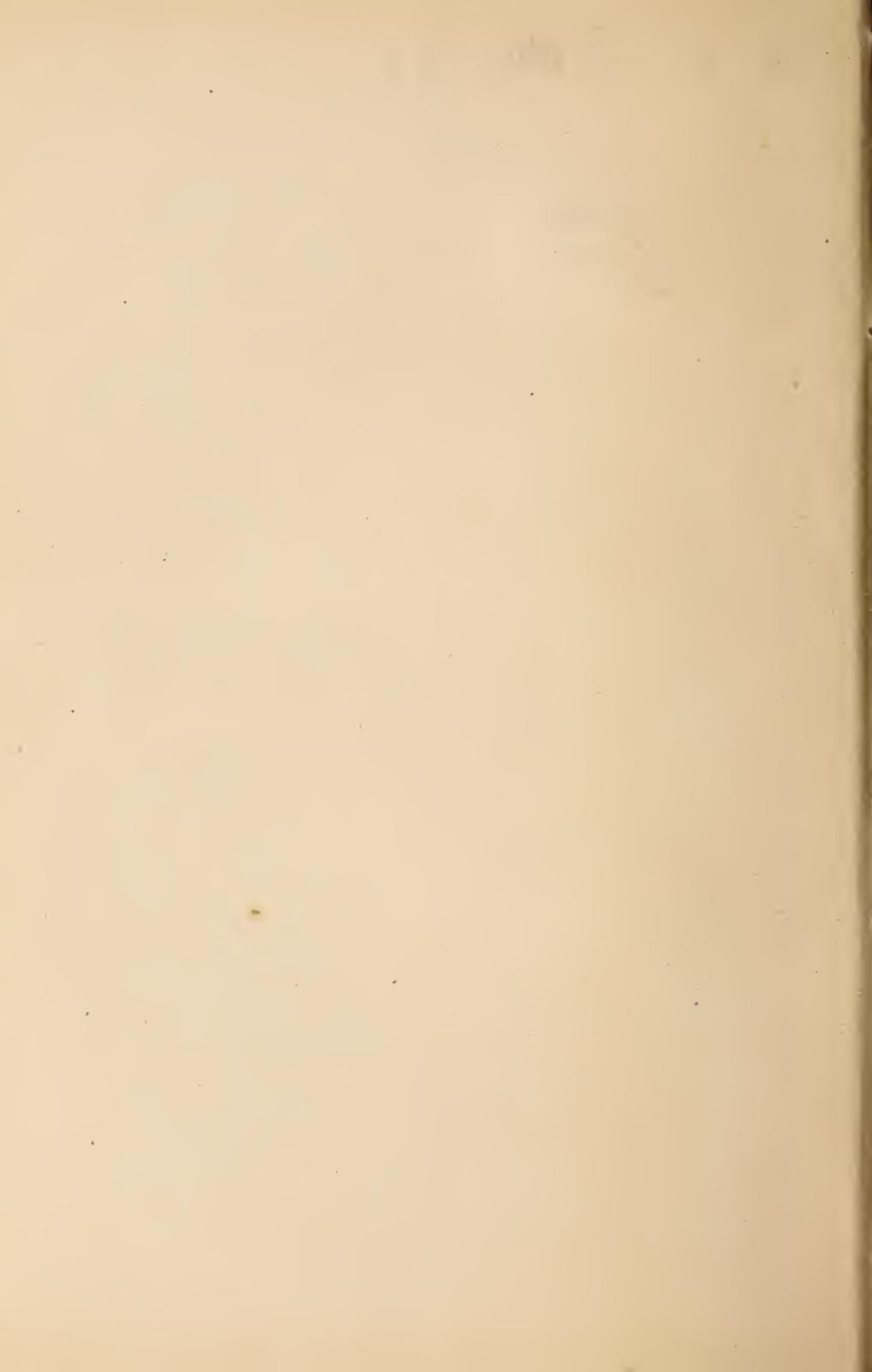
value of proper family training in regard to the nation's life and prosperity. The throne can be secure in freedom only when the family life is sacred,—when the relations of the family are recognized and sacredly observed and guarded. Let every parent seek to secure the best teachings,—teachings from God's word,—and he will have accomplished what, to him, is more than a sentiment. This book takes the scriptures as its text. If the same spirit whose inspiration gave it, should use it, then its mission will have been accomplished.

Happy they who, taking the position, succeed in forming a household whose whole life may be made a benediction and a joy.

SAMUEL D. RICE.

WESLEYAN FEMALE COLLEGE,

May 2nd, 1878.



THE DOMESTIC SANCTUARY.

CHAPTER I.

HOME.

There is, perhaps, no word in the English language in which the loving sympathies of human nature so freely and so fully express themselves as the word *home*. It is the centre of all that is interesting and delightful—where all our affections meet and entwine themselves around “whatsoever things are lovely.” It is not the thatched cottage nor the stately mansion (with its extensive or more limited surroundings, with its richly furnished apartments or well supplied tables) that constitutes home; but all that is endearing in human relationship, all that is tender in human sympathy, all that is true and faithful in human friendship, is wrapped up in the word *home*. We like to be where our infirmities are allowed without criticism, where our motives

and secrets can be known with confidence, and where the whole circle, swayed by the influence of affectionate tenderness and love, serve one another.

Such confidence can nowhere be found, but at *home*. What a fund of pleasing recollections, like the early flowers (such as the violet and the snowdrop) of spring, flows around the hearth of home when we remember the gambols of childhood; the rural and careless sports of youth; the high resolves, the heroic purposes, the buoyant hopes, with the dreams of airbuilt castles, of rising manhood; the chastened feeling, both of sorrow and of joy, of riper years: all these are closely associated with the word *home*. There stands the same old clock that measured off the hours of childhood, whose well-known sound and pointed finger called to study, to school, and to work, and whose evening chimes gathered both parents and children to the altar of cheerful, holy sacrifice. There is father as the priest of the household, invested with a sanctity similar to that with which our childish imagination clothed Abraham, and Isaac, and Moses. There are the two old arm chairs, occupied by mother and father, who take the old book, shattered and worn with long service; its pages read with a reverence and in a

tone that yet seems to vibrate upon one's very heart ; their mingled supplications and thanksgivings ascend, to be offered with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which is before the throne. Love in its highest earthly perfection is here. Conjugal love, parental love, filial love, brotherly love, sisterly love—all gather around and delightfully blend in that sacred spot, home. It has an undying grasp upon the heart's deepest sympathies and kindest feelings. There is a charm and a magic about it which makes one feel spellbound through life, yea, even forever. Mutual recognition, social intercourse, fraternal affection, security and repose, are congenial elements of a pious home.

THE FAMILY BIBLE.

This book is all that's left me now,
Tears will unbidden start,
With faltering lip and throbbing brow,
I press it to my heart.
For many generations past
Here is our family tree ;
My mother's hand this Bible clasped,
She, dying, gave it me.

Ah! well do I remember those
Whose names these records bear,
Who round the hearthstone used to close
After the evening prayer,
And speak of what these pages said
In tones my heart would thrill.
Though they are with the silent dead,
Here are they living still.

My father read this holy book
To brothers, sisters dear;
How calm was my dear mother's look,
Who leaned God's word to hear.
Her angel face I see it now—
What thronging memories come!
Again that little group is met
Within the walls of home.

Thou truest friend man ever knew,
Thy constancy I've tried.
When all was false, I've found thee true,
My councillor and guide.
The mines of earth no treasures give
That could this volume buy:
In teaching me the way to live,
It taught me how to die.

CHAPTER II.

HUSBAND, AND HIS INDIVIDUAL OBLIGATIONS.

In the constitution of home is implied a community of persons and social relationships, each possessing a distinct interest and responsibility. There is husband and wife; master and mistress; parents and children; sons and daughters; brothers and sisters; men servants and maid servants.

Although there is a sense in which each person in this community of social relationships is equally interested in every other, yet there is a wide difference in the responsibility of one to the other. The husband, being the head of the house, as king and priest of the whole, to him, and to him only, is deputed the authority of law and order. It is his right to rule. The outer world cares to know no one but him. It is his place to provide for the necessities and comforts of the whole. These have to be sought in the field and in the market; in the workshop; behind the counter and in the office, and sometimes obtained with disagreeable competition and petty jealousy. He is known among the higher and the lower

walks of life; diligent in business, and economical and frugal in his rules of action. With all this he may not be successful. This may greatly disappoint and grieve him, and his competitors may smile at his misfortune. But this is the law of discipline. If he has energy of mind and strength of will, with steady perseverance he will rise above it all, a wiser and a better man. Good men are often tried, that they may become great, to bring into play the latent energies of their nature, which otherwise might remain comparatively dormant. Tried men are generally true men.

Husbands are required to love their wives and be not bitter against them. They are to love them as their own bodies, for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church. The grand rule according to which every husband is to act, is to love his wife as Christ loved the Church. But how did Christ love the Church? He gave himself for it; he laid down his life for it. It is the duty of the husband to protect and defend his wife, and give honor to her as the weaker vessel.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE CHARACTER AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE WIFE.

“I will,” saith the Apostle Paul (1st Tim. v., 14), “that the younger women marry, bear children, rule the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.” As she has the conceded right to guide the house, much depends upon her judgment and habits. Many persons are too rash in venturing upon the duties and responsibilities of married life. Their qualifications are extremely meagre, and errors of judgment may result in errors of practice, which may be the source of trouble for a long time to come. This is to be regretted. To be sorry goes but a little way in effecting a remedy. If wise councillors are near who will kindly give the benefit of their wisdom and experience, and the young wife is willing to learn, then vigorous application and perseverance may eventually make things much better. It would be greatly to the advantage of all good women, whether married or contemplating to be, if they would

thoroughly study that beautiful description of a model wife, given by King Lemuel in Prov. xxxi., 10-31. A few of the more prominent features we will supply, referring you to the original for a more perfect likeness.

There is her general character—she is a *virtuous* woman. Her motives are pure and strong. The principles of character are well balanced and understood. She has great mental energy, to subordinate all things to her rule. Her value is above all financial considerations, her price being far above rubies. The old proverb says, “A fortune in a wife is far greater than a fortune with one.” The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her. She is prudent and judicious, looks well to the ways of her household, so that her husband need not fret about the management of home wants and home duties. Her husband’s happiness is continually in view, and she kindly prevents or removes all she thinks might cross his path or interfere with his pleasure. Her goodness is unmixed goodness; it is, also, constant and permanent. Such unlimited esteem and unshaken confidence should never be betrayed or trifled with, but the most convincing evidence constantly furnished that her heart’s sincere affection has not been misplaced.

In arranging the conveniences and providing for the comfort of her household, she does not buy things made ready to her hand if she has the means of making them herself. Wool from her own flocks, or flax from her own fields, is carefully gathered and manufactured, working willingly with her own hands. Her time is also precious, and cannot be wasted. Time lost is money lost. She is up early in the morning before daylight, preparing food for her household. She buys in the best and cheapest market. She raises her own luxuries; by the fruit of her own hand she planteth a vineyard. She studies her own health; by proper exercise her loins and arms are girt with strength. She is not forgetful of the poor and afflicted, but stretcheth out her hands to help them. She is not afraid of the snow and cold, for herself and family are well provided for with double garments, or two-fold what they are accustomed to wear. Her house is well furnished, her person richly attired, so as to be equal to her husband when he sitteth among the elders of the land, or as magistrate in the court. She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She is not known from the noise she makes, but her words are well considered and fitly spoken.

In the management of the family, she is intelligent and wise. Her mind is well cultivated. She is amiable in her carriage, full of good nature, well tempered and obliging in her manners and address, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. "She looketh well to the ways of her household." She watches, and studies, and directs all their movements. She has great force of character and power of control. Her counsel is respectfully sought and pleasantly given. The characters of the family are moulded after her own fashion. They are well educated, trained in the art of civility and politeness. They are well behaved to everybody, whether poor or rich, and everywhere respected and honored. The influence of all this is felt and appreciated; hence her children rise up and call her blessed. They are unitedly and devoutly grateful for such a good mother, and invoke upon her suitable blessings in return. "Her husband also, and he praiseth her." He is indebted to her for his success in business, for his high social position, for his distinguished family; through her they are all justly held in universal esteem. He is sensible of her many excellencies and commends her for her doings. He does not know her equal. She is the excellent of the earth, and he has unwavering confidence in her. Many daugh-

ters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.

The crowning excellence with which this distinguished woman's character was invested was her religion. It was this which gave tone, and purity, and dignity, and genuineness to the whole. "Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain." All earthly accomplishments, graceful and beautiful as they may be, are only human at best, and then often fictitious and unreliable. "But a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." This is never fading beauty, which, after unfolding itself in silken leaves below, flourishes with greater lustre and in perpetual bloom in a higher and more congenial clime. "Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates." May she long enjoy the fruit of her labors; may she see her children's children; may what she hath done be spoken of for a memorial of her to generations yet unborn; let her bright example be everywhere known; let it be set before every daughter of Adam, particularly every wife, but especially every mother, and let them learn from her what husbands have a right to expect in their wives — the mistresses of their families and the mothers of their children.

THE MOTHER OF JOHN AND CHARLES WESLEY.

It is said, by no less an authority than Dr. Adam Clark, that he had met at least with an equal to this Jewish matron in the person of the mother of the late Revds. John and Charles Wesley.

He says: "I am constrained to add this testimony, after having traced her from her birth to her death, through all the relations which a woman can have upon earth. Her christianity gave to her virtues and excellences an exhaltation which the Jewish matron could not possess. Besides, she was a woman of great learning and information, and of a depth of mind and reach of thought seldom to be found among the daughters of Eve, and not often among the sons of Adam."

In another place he says: "I have been acquainted with many pious females, I have read the lives of several others and composed the memoirs of a few, but such a woman, take her for all in all, I have not heard of, I have not read of, nor with her equal have I been acquainted."

Mrs. Wesley had a large family and was the instructor of her children, and subsequently became their counsellor and guide. We cannot fail to admire the tact and cleverness, as

well as the moral courage and indomitable perseverance, of a woman, who, amidst the ordinary care of a numerous family, and the troubles and sorrows of the Epworth Parsonage, devoted six hours a day to the painstaking and effective school education of her children. She also steadily and faithfully enforced her domestic discipline and superintended her household affairs. The mother of nineteen children (ten of whom outlived their childhood), her provident forethought was often severely taxed to provide for her family food and raiment, under circumstances, too, of peculiar trial and provocation. By fire twice rendered homeless, and with a husband often involved in parochial disputes, and at one time actually imprisoned (the result of misfortune and spite), Mrs. Wesley, uncomplaining, adhered to her purposes and plans, and even found time to write able treatises on religious topics and doctrines, and when the Rector was busy in London, taking part in convocation affairs, she made provision, by her own discourse and the reading of awakening sermons, for the spiritual wants of the parishioners, thus becoming, if not his official assistant, yet his effective substitute.

The Pharisees, in the days of our Lord, had allowed a certain privilege, permitted by

the law of Moses to become an oppressive tradition, by which the wife was humiliated and degraded. If a man had a dislike to his wife, he could take and write her a bill of divorcement for the most trivial offence, and put her away. But our Lord, as lawmaker and judge, forbid it, and said that she should not be put away, except for one particular sin, —the sin of adultery. In this the sacredness of the divine institution of marriage was dissolved; the covenant bond was broken; she was no more worthy of his confidence and protection: therefore, for that sin, and for that only, was he justified in putting her away. The teaching of Christ was, that what God had joined together, man was not to put asunder.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HUSBAND AND WIFE IN THEIR UNITED RELATIONSHIP, AND AS HEIRS TOGETHER OF THE GRACE OF LIFE.

The judgment of God pronounced upon man, while alone and in a state of celibacy, was, that it was not a good state. "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone, I will make him an help meet for him." God made the woman for the man. He also made the woman out of the man, to intimate that the closest union and the most affectionate attachment should subsist in the matrimonial connection, so that the man should ever consider and treat the woman as a part of himself; and as no one ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and supports it, so should a man deal with his wife. And, on the other hand, the woman should consider that the man was not made for her, but that she was made for the man, and derived, under God, her being from him; therefore, the wife should see that she reverence her husband (Eph. v., 33). This is flesh of my flesh, therefore shall a man leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife.

How happy must such a state be where God's institution is properly regarded—where the parties are married, as the Apostle expresses it, in the Lord.

Dr. Macknight has some very good and homely remarks here: "The husband is to love his wife; the wife to obey and venerate her husband. Love and protection on the one hand, affectionate subjection and fidelity on the other. The husband should provide for his wife without encouraging profuseness; watch over her conduct without giving her vexation; keep her in subjection without making her a slave."

The range of interests requiring their united counsel being compressed within a limited circle, makes their duties, though important, yet comparatively easy. The duties of the household, proper, such as house accommodation and furniture, sickness, education, and the future welfare of the family, are included in a joint consideration. Church government the charity and wisdom of the Apostle does not permit her to interfere in, but to keep silent, and if she would learn anything, let her ask her husband at home. (1st Cor. xiv., 34-35; 1st Tim. ii., 9-14). Her individual taste in personal adornment is not to be absorbed in external ornaments and costly apparel, that

can be put on or taken off just as vanity and the influence of circumstances shall dictate ; but with modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, as women professing godliness ; yea, that hidden man of the heart, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. “ For after this manner in the old time the holy women, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands ; even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord.”
(1st Peter, iii., 1-6.)

All people in the olden time, although their names may be allowed a place in inspired history, were not given as examples for imitation, but, in many cases, as ensamples for our warning and admonition, for our correction and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect—thoroughly furnished unto every good work.

The sacred Scriptures present us with some glaring inconsistencies, where domestic affection and honor have been shamefully outraged, and social honesty and forbearance prostrated, either by the disguised treachery of one towards the other, or by the united agreement of both, to perpetrate a wrong.

ISAAC AND REBEKAH.

One of the greatest and most fruitful sources of evil in a family is parental partiality, which prevailed to an alarming extent in the families of "the chief of the fathers." See it with its train of painful consequences in the history of Jacob and Joseph, and the coat of many colors. When his brethren saw that the father loved him more than all the rest, they hated him and could not speak peaceably unto him. See it, also, in Laban and his family; but more especially with Isaac and Rebekah towards Jacob and Esau. It is very significantly stated that Isaac loved Esau and Rebekah loved Jacob. This absorbing favoritism scattered the bloom and marred the fruit of domestic harmony, by mutual bickerings, jealousies and feuds. See the old man bending beneath the weight of six score years and the many infirmities of a very checkered life, and his eyesight failing him. He is anxious to make arrangements for his household before he departs. In this he is to be commended. Many a family would have saved heavy expenses and painful disappointment had a proper disposal of its affairs been made by its head before death had made it impossible.

The manner in which Isaac went through this transaction is questionable, and not in harmony with religion and good judgment, but indicates a desire on his part to secure a great advantage for his favorite son at the expense of the other, and an attempt to thwart the purpose of God. Why so much apparent hurry and secrecy? There is no account of any attempt at seeking divine guidance. Family counsel is avoided. Rebekah, the wife of his youth and old age, is not consulted. What had savory venison to do with a solemn testamentary transaction? No wonder that the whole plan miscarried, and that the old man "trembled exceedingly."

It is affecting to find a wife and a mother, of the age and experience of Rebekah, taking advantage of her husband's age and infirmity to deceive him. The root of her treachery was ambition; but it was a woman's ambition, and therefore not for herself, but for another. We tremble as we behold the son led on by the mother, with the name of God upon his lips, deceiving his father, whose eyes were so dim that he could not see. Although it was the declared purpose of God that the rights of the firstborn should be with Jacob, it was never intended that they should be obtained in so reprehensible a way. A little patience

and trust in providence, and in due time the transfer would be completed, and that upon a divine plan and with the divine blessing. We might profitably ponder the weighty lessons taught in this family plotting and counter-plotting. It is a great evil and glaringly inconsistent with parental duty to divide their family into pets and favorites, and the contrary. In this way we never can succeed in establishing domestic discipline. After this Jacob was compelled to flee from home, under the guilt of selfishness and falsehood. Esau also departs, with a fixed purpose that his revenge should eventually be satisfied in taking away the life of his brother. What a series of vexations, disappointments and calamities, with a constant stream of treacherous overbearing, followed him to the end? What son could look with respect upon a guilty mother after this? Would not her extravagant love change into shame and reproach, and result in arousing the unkindest antipathies. We are also reminded by the circumstances of the vanity of trusting in an arm of flesh. "Upon *me* be thy curse, my son," said the doting, self-deceived mother, in the moment of exaggerated passion for her son's prosperity and renown. But is one sinner a refuge for another? Is it not daring presumption to assume the responsibility of so

desperate a deed? Her scheme to get him away from threatened danger led him to the very place where her crafty brother deals exactly with him as she had counselled Jacob to do with Esau. She flattered herself that his absence would only be for a short time, but it lasted throughout her life, and she saw him no more. A scrupulous observance of the divine will makes the wisest parents, the most obedient children, the kindest neighbors, the most loyal subjects, and the truest patriots.

AHAB AND JEZEBEL.

There is in the twenty-first chapter of the first book of Kings, 1-25, an account of a royal pair, whose features of character it may be profitable to consider. Ahab, as a successful warrior, had recently returned from Aphek, elated with two decisive victories over Ben-hadad and thirty-two confederate kings. He had just been reprimanded by a prophet in God's name for misusing an advantage he had won in the battle field. He was "heavy and displeased" with God, the prophet, and with everyone but himself. While in that unhappy mood, walking one day in the palace ground, he cast an evil eye upon the vineyard of his neighbor. He did not need it for a vineyard, but he thought it would make a kitchen garden; but,

whether or no, he did not like his grounds overlooked by an insignificant neighbor. He offered to buy the vineyard of Naboth at a price, or change it for another. But the law of Israel did not allow them to sell the inheritance of their fathers. Naboth's great respect for the law would not allow him to accept the offer, so he told Ahab he could not sell. With this he was indignant and greatly annoyed: to think that kings and governors by the score should submit themselves and bow down to him, yet this superstitious and religious enthusiast, and ungenerous neighbor, refuses to oblige him. He resents the refusal as a gross affront. He goes into his house "heavy and displeased," refuses to eat bread, goes to bed, turning his face to the wall, or sulks, and won't speak to any one. There was a time when man was alone, but God had compassion on him and provided a helpmeet for him. If such help was then necessary and congenial, how much more so now, when his intellect is broken down and his mental faculties prostrate and confused. In times of affliction and trial, to have a true sympathizer and wise counsellor by your side, in whom you have unlimited confidence, is a great boon. How commanding, for good or for evil, is the influence of a wife? If she possess her unquestionable right, the undivided

love and affection of her husband, it must be inevitably great, and it may be capable of indefinite expansion. If the husband be a man of turbulent spirit, her quietness may calm him. If covetous, she may teach him the pleasure and blessedness of giving. If extravagant, she may restrain him. If malignant, her love and affection may subdue it. If apt to misunderstand a neighbor, she may soften the angles of dispute and preserve the harmony unbroken. Verily, he that findeth such a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord. On the other hand, if a wife is a power for good; she is also a great power for evil. The poet has observed that

“ The true, successful way to man is woman.”

Of all the agencies which Satan has employed since the world began, few have been so dexterously successful as wilful, intriguing woman. Adam, but for Eve, never might have eaten of the forbidden fruit. But for Rebekah, as we have shown, Jacob would not have deceived his dying father. If Samson had not been so fascinated as to have divulged the secret gift of God to a deceitful woman, he would not have fallen into the hands of the Philistines. Had it not been for Job’s unwavering confidence in the divine integrity, the hasty

profanity of his wife might have involved them in remediless ruin, by becoming voluntary victims of the divine displeasure. Herod would not have beheaded John the Baptist had it not been for Herodias, his wife; and, had not Jezebel stirred up Ahab, he would not have dared to countenance the horrible deeds that followed. She went into his chamber, while he lay on his bed in his sulky mood, and taunted him with cowardice, and suggested a plausible plot. But for this Ahab might have got relief through his tears, “and washed his grief away.” But Jezebel, his wife, came to him and said, “Why is thine heart so sad that thou eatest no bread?” Ahab, like a soft weeping school boy that has lost his marbles, replies, “Because I spoke unto Naboth, the Jezreelite, and said unto him, ‘Give me the vineyard for money, or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it;’ and he answered, ‘I will not give thee my vineyard.’” He overstates the case, so as to clear himself and criminate Naboth. Jezebel, instead of allaying his rage by calm, dignified persuasion, only aggravates his feelings by adding fuel to the flame. She despises the cowardliness of her husband, and is indignant he should so demean himself. “Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel?” she exclaimed; “art thou, or Naboth, King? Arise and eat

bread, and let thine heart be merry ; I will get thee the vineyard.” To effect her purpose, she wrote letters in Ahab’s name to the elders and nobles of Jezreel, saying that Naboth was a dangerous neighbor, and that the peace of the city was in danger in consequence of his crimes, and requiring them to condemn and execute without mercy. These instructions found ready response from her friends, and Naboth was executed. The news of his death soon reached Jezebel, and she, exulting in the success of her diabolical project, approaches the bedside of her dejected husband, and says, “Arise now and take possession of the vineyard, for Naboth is not alive, but dead.” Delighted with the information, he does not linger, but goes at once to take possession of the coveted treasure. It is likely they destroyed the whole of his family; and then the King seized on his grounds as confiscated, or without any heir-at-law. (2nd Kings, ix., 26.) As he moves along its sacred walks, not pensive and sad that so questionable an inheritance should have been got at so great a sacrifice, but flushed with delight that the obstinate enthusiast has been put out of the way, he is suddenly disturbed by the sound of approaching footsteps. He sees a man clothed in hairy garments, with a leathern girdle about his loins. Ahab has met with him

before, and smarted under his cutting reproofs, which he has not forgot. "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" he angrily exclaimed. The stern and terrible reply is, "I have found thee; because thou hast sold thyself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord." Thus saith the Lord, "In the place where the dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine." Of Jezebel also spake the Lord, saying, "The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel." And of the whole male posterity, "Him that dieth of Ahab in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat." What a black epitaph is affixed to the royal memorial by inspiration: "There was none like Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up." Then the fearful retribution which overtook her is horrible to contemplate. She, by the command of Jehu, was cast down from her own room window and was killed; then her mangled body was trodden to pieces under his horses' feet, and accordingly the predictions of Elijah, "The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel," were fulfilled. The dogs eat all but the skull, the feet and the hands—not enough left to necessitate a funeral. So no costly tomb, or even a grassy mound, exists to per-

petuate her memory. Does not this case present a standing warning against all such alliances.

We live in deeds, not years ; in thoughts, not breath ;
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart throbs. He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.

DAVID AND HIS HOUSEHOLD.

David was the most illustrious and heroic of the ancient worthies in the administration of righteous government in his family, himself taking the lead. Hence he says: “ I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. * * I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house ; he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight : but the faithful they shall dwell with me.” (Psalms ci.) His affection for the welfare of his family was strong and unyielding. Few men ever rose higher or shone brighter than David.

An inspired historian says that his fame went out into all lands, and the Lord brought the fear of him upon all nations. He was prosperous and honorable in the business of life, bold and daring in the defence of his flocks, successful and triumphant as a warrior. As a sovereign, how just his judgment, how prosperous and extended his reign. As a prophet, what a distinct seer into the ages to come, for God had

sworn with an oath to him, that of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne. His moral and religious character was next to blameless: for “David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from anything which he had commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.” (1st Kings xv., 5). That in this instance he grievously departed from God no one would attempt to deny, but was not his repentance the deepest and most exemplary we have on record? When a man has fallen, and makes the speediest return to God by confession and repentance, he proves that that transgression is no part of his character. He does not respect it. He loathes and abhors it.

Many are great in public life, and dazzle the multitude by the number and magnitude of their worldly achievements, but whose private character and domestic virtues are held in strict reserve. Abroad they appear studious to please and excel; at home their conduct presents a melancholy reverse. But David appeared as solicitous to please God at home as abroad; and, whether viewed in the camp, the senate, the sanctuary, or the household, we see the same devotional disposition pervading all his movements.

FETCHING THE ARK.

The sixth chapter of 2nd Samuel contains a record of most exciting transactions, and in which David took the most conspicuous part. He, and thirty thousand of the chosen men of Israel, formed a grand procession to fetch the ark of God from Kirgath Jerim unto the city of David; but instead of committing it to the care and management of the priests and Levites, who should have borne it upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, they, in imitation of the neighboring and idolatrous nations who drew the idols about in carriages for exhibition, placed the ark upon a new cart. The oxen yoked to the cart stumbled, and Uzzah, fearing the ark was in danger of falling, stretched forth his hand to support it; but God smote him for his error, that he died by the ark of God. David, alarmed at this awful token of the divine displeasure, hesitated to proceed, and a temporary residence was provided for the ark in the house of Obed-edom; and there the symbol of the divine presence rested, and there the blessing of Jehovah dwelt, and everything prospered with Obed-edom while the ark abode in his house. (2nd Sam. vi., 11, 12.)

David, hearing of this, resolved upon another attempt to remove it unto his own city,

and profiting by his former error, he now appointed the Levites, the proper legitimate persons, to bear it upon their shoulders. As soon as it was freed from its local entanglements and ready for departure, he caused seven bullocks and seven rams to be offered in sacrifice as an atonement for past omissions of duty. (1st Chron. xv.) David was there as king, but could take no active part in the ceremony without being clad in appropriate garments. He therefore clothed himself in a linen ephod, as more expressive of his mind and will. Zeal of God's house absorbed every other consideration, and the plain garment in which a common Levite ministered in before the Lord was more in harmony with his motives and pleasures than distinguished royalty with its gorgeous display. After they had given their fullest demonstration of joy, and pitched the ark in the place appointed for its reception, and every one receiving a cake of bread and a good piece of flesh and a flagon of wine, David blessed them in the name of the Lord of Hosts. Then, notwithstanding all this national display, this religious excitement, this unbounded enthusiasm of music and dancing, all must be superseded and make way for duties waiting for his attention. Then David returned to bless his household.

The duty affected the unity of the royal household. His wife, who eyed him with a scowl of contempt and accosted him in a strain of insulting and sarcastic impiety when she saw him put off the kingly garments which distinguished him above the rest, felt her dignity greatly humiliated, and in her frenzy came out to meet him and said, "How glorious was the King of Israel to-day, who uncovered himself in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself." Such was the impudent and irritating language in which David was addressed when he went to bless his household. David explained and remonstrated, saying, "It was before the Lord I did it, but if this makes me base in thy sight, I will yet be more vile." The taunting, godless spirit of Michal has influenced many a wife since the days of David, the consequences of which have been most ruinous to family peace and prosperity. Man everywhere is man, and whether he shall advance or decline depends on the motive principles by which he is actuated. Wherever a system of mental ignorance, sloth and bondage prevails, domestic and social advancement is impossible. Families and empires do not rise and fall wholly by the immediate power of God; they are not thrown up like new islands

in the sea, nor fall like cities in an earthquake, by the direct exaction of the divine will. They are carried through the various stages of advance or decline by their virtues and vices, which God makes the instruments of their prosperity or destruction. No people can be great without liberty as well as order, and there is no true liberty where men submit to be slaves in soul, and crouch beneath the yoke of a spiritual serfdom.

CHAPTER V.

THE FAMILY INSTITUTION.

The principal objects of the institution of marriage and the division of the human race into the smaller societies called families, was to raise a godly seed, and in this sense the New Testament itself specifically calls the children of godly parents "holy." (1st Cor. vii., 14.)

The same authority also constitutes a godly household a church, as in the case of Stephanas of Nymphas, Lydia, Philemon, and the keeper of the prison at Philippi. (Rom. xvi., 5; Cor. xvi., 19; Col. iv., 15, etc.)

From these and other considerations, it must appear evident to every candid mind that the household of every Christian should answer to this character. Far higher ends than those of a temporal nature have to be answered by the association of a Christian man, and his wife, children and servants, in one domestic circle. The apostle Paul is very emphatic in the qualifications of a minister, that he shall be one that ruleth well his own house. If he know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God? The

church in the house first as preparatory to the government, though under a fuller unction and in a separated character, in the Church Catholic.

THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

The covenant of grace made to Abraham and all his believing posterity, of which baptism is now the sign, was made in the assumption that fatherly training and teaching in the case of believers would never be wanting. (Gen. xviii., 19.) Whenever a baptism, therefore, takes place in a family, it must be clearly understood that the rite admits the recipient into both churches, that of the house and that of the body of believers. The child, as such, has been placed in a position of infallible safety. It is in a gracious state, so far as its capacity and circumstances admit. "Of such," says our Lord (not of such like), "is the kingdom of heaven." The whole case of the child has been met and provided for by redemptive arrangements set forth by the Apostle in the 5th chapter of Romans. As an infant, so certainly as it is a sharer in the "offence and condemnation of the first man," so certainly is it a sharer in the "free gift" and glorious "righteousness" of the second man—the Lord from heaven. But when personal guilt has

been superadded to original sin, an element of uncertainty has been introduced that may vitiate the transaction. The irresponsibility of the child, so far from invalidating its baptism, is the very thing that invests it with certainty.

The institution of infant consecration, whether by circumcision or by baptism, is sufficient proof to us that we are not left to choose whether our children are to be religious or not. That they are to be so is a ruled case, since in their earliest days the Triune God claims their service, and in token puts the sacred mark of His covenant upon them. The sacrament of baptism meets them on the very threshold of life. It claims them for God, and signs and seals them as His. It is God's public investiture of the child with the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. By the concurrence of all the parties concerned it has been decided, so far as it can without their voluntary action, that they are to be the consecrated servants of God. What remains to make that transaction complete and give fulfilment and consummation to the design that commenced in baptism, is the free, sincere, intelligent consent of the children themselves.

To carry out these designs some very great and learned men (whose judgment upon the

question is, at least, deserving of respectful reflection) have considered that the primary responsibility in this matter rests upon the Church. There is no doubt that a grave responsibility abides with the Church in providing ordinances, evangelical instruction and discipline, pastoral oversight by truly spiritual men, and proper and available arrangements for the religious education of its rising charge; but it requires great care lest we should so interfere in church duties and offices as to supersede, or even in the slightest degree lower, our own. It is the instinct of nature, it is the law of God, that upon parents should first devolve the obligation to bring children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and no godfather or godmother, and no minister, and no sabbath school teacher, can take their place. Parents of course are entitled to avail themselves of all the help placed at their disposal, and they who most worthily sustain the parental relationship will be most anxious to realize it.

THE REASONABLENESS OF FAMILY RELIGION.

In consequence of the lines of domestic worship not being definitely drawn and enforced by a divine commandment, some have raised objections against the duty itself. No

christian man, rightly under the influence of religious principles, will ask for any positive recognition binding him in his family to worship God. No one, if he is sufficiently conscious of the weighty responsibilities which devolve upon him as to the spiritual interests of his family, will need to be goaded to the discharge of duties so important by any express command of holy scripture. What would be thought of me if I should demand an express precept to enforce me to feed my children, another to clothe them, another to educate them, and another to train them to some creditable and useful employment? All this, you might say very properly in reply, is absurd ; your obligations rest on the dictates of nature. Very true, I answer, and is not renewed nature to have a voice, and something to teach, which is far higher still ?

PATRIARCHAL USAGES.

In the narratives of sacred writ, in the characters of those holy men of old, our path of duty is with clearness pointed out. In patriarchal times, worship was almost invariably domestic in its character. One of the first acts upon record, after the destruction of the old world, was an act of social piety—of family worship. After Noah and his wife, and his

sons, and his sons' wives with him, had gone forth out of the ark, "Noah builded an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings upon the altar; and the Lord, on behalf of Noah and his family, smelled a sweet savor." In the families of Abraham, the worship of God, in the religious training of his household, is, indeed, the subject of marked approval. "I know him," saith the Almighty, "that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." Wherever the patriarch Jacob went, there he erected an altar unto the Lord; and notwithstanding his very checkered life, yet, in every place, God gave him a satisfactory token of his approval and blessing.

THE LAW OF MOSES.

The religious instruction of families, doubtless as a branch of domestic worship, is solemnly enjoined in the law of Moses. "These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up; and thou

shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes, and thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house and on thy gates." (Genesis vi., 4-9.)

THE EVILS OF IGNORANCE.

Ignorance is the negation of all moral excellencies. The soul without knowledge is not good. Ignorance is a state, cold and cheerless, by which the finer feelings of the human soul are locked up, and the individual is deprived of the happiness that would arise from their culture and exercise. All the pleasures of the uninformed, if pleasures they can be called, arise from external objects; and when satiated with these, having no mental resources, no power of producing enjoyment from their own thoughts and reflections, they sink unto emptiness and bewilderment, little better than idiotism itself: whereas knowledge is power, and wisdom is better than strength. Instruction is to the mind what culture is to the plant. The mind of an infant is said to be a perfect blank, without intelligence, or even conscious existence, but it cannot long remain so: like the neglected soil, weeds will be seen to spring up without effort; but, as products of the native earth, so early in life ideas begin to shoot,

habits begin to form, and propensities to prevail. As soon as there is a capacity for the reception of instruction, then it should be communicated. "In the morning sow thy seed." Children should be taught repeatedly. "My dear," said the venerable saint Wesley, to his devoted wife Susanna, "you teach that child the same thing twenty times over, why do you do so?" "Why, my dear," was her calm and significant reply, "because nineteen times wont do." So, for successful effort, there needs "line upon line, and precept upon precept."

INSTRUCTION.

Another means necessary to be observed in the promotion of household religion is Instruction. Example, it must be allowed, possesses an instructive influence : it silently and unobtrusively courts the attention of thoughtful minds ; but the purest examples cannot always command success. Children and young people are often thoughtless, unaccustomed to reflection, their minds are easily influenced, and foolishness is bound up in their hearts. Religion is not always acceptable, pleasure is courted and embraced. Darkness is put for light, and light for darkness. Hence where religious instruction is forborne family religion will not flourish.

It is recorded of Prince Albert, sometimes called "Albert the Good," that he spent several hours a day in training the royal children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and in the supervision of their general education ; that he examined every book put into their hands; that, while they had many teachers, he himself was their chief instructor, and that in all this he was ably supported by the Queen.

The prince directed that a marble monument be executed of Edward VI. and placed on the stair-case of Windsor Castle. The young and pious monarch is represented pointing with his sceptre to this text on the page of an open Bible: "Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord." This was intended as a lesson to the Prince of Wales and the other royal children.

TRAINING.

Successfully to bring up a family in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, is among the greatest achievements of this life of warfare. Where a family is large there generally exists considerable diversity of constitutional temperament, where modified rule and authority is required to secure respectful and effective management. To do this impartially, requires

a good share of practical acquaintance with human nature, a well-balanced mind, and steady attention to the development of the human heart. Diversity of characteristics existed largely in Jacob's family, and according to which his prophecy portrayed their future character and destiny. (Gen. xlix., 1-27.) Jacob, as prince and a father in the patriarchal church, was not very successful in his family training. During the early part of his married life he was away from home engaged with his jealous and unscrupulous father-in-law. His family, in this respect, suffered as a consequence.

It should be the object of all persons having rising families to provide homes of their own, where no stranger intermeddleth therewith; otherwise parental authority may be very much impaired, and what otherwise might be good and effective training, seriously imperilled. But no matter how wise the government, or how judiciously administered, some persons have no respect for it; others heedlessly disregard it, while others violently object to its authority and rule.

Children love dominion: this is their earliest and most predominant propensity. Their will is their only law, and, long before they can speak, they grow peevish, fretful, sullen and out of humor, if their wills happen to be crossed.

I will, or I won't, are reiterated in every nursery, and found in every child's vocabulary. But children must be governed; their wills must be subdued; they must be made to do what, in many instances, they dislike. Subordination, and not sovereignty, is their province. Where children can be governed by love alone, chastisement must be forborne; but this can rarely be done. A parent must be reverenced; feared as well as loved. There are children so intolerably insolent and obstinately perverse, that nothing short of correction will conquer them. They must be punished to be governed. But punishment should be judiciously inflicted: moral delinquencies, and not accidental errors, should be the grounds of punishment. To chastise a child indiscriminately for every mistake, partakes more of savage barbarity than salutary discipline, and totally defeats the design which chastisement should have in view. The precepts and teachings of the sacred scriptures should be well studied and observed, in order to the judicious correction of children. "He that spareth the rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." (Prov. xiii., 24.) "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." (Prov. xix., 18.) "We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us,

and we gave them reverence." (Heb. xii., 9.) "A prudent and kind mother," says Locke, "of my acquaintance, was forced to whip her little daughter, at her first coming home from nurse, eight times successively the same morning, before she could master her stubbornness. If she had left off sooner, and stopped at the seventh whipping, she had spoiled the child for ever, and by her unprevailing blows only confirmed her refractoriness, very hard afterwards to be cured; but wisely persisting till she had bent her mind and suppled her will,—the only end of correction and chastisement,—she established her authority thoroughly on the very first occasion, and had ever after a very ready compliance and obedience in all things from her daughter; for as this was the first time, so I think it was the last, she ever struck her."

GOVERNMENT.

Another very essential method is the exercise of good government. All government originated in patriarchal or parental authority, and families contain the rudiments of empires; and as the happiness of a nation may be promoted by the wisdom and justice of the legislature, so the welfare of a family depends most essentially on its government. He who is at the head of a family is bound to govern

it. How difficult the undertaking, to shun the opposite extremes of remissness and severity ; what wisdom, and patience, and firmness are required to govern a family in the fear of the Lord.

The government of a householder over his domestics should be exercised for moral and religious purposes. By virtue of his authority, he should restrain them from all questionable society and places of entertainment. Young people who are suffered to deck themselves out in all the finery of fashion, to have a wide range of acquaintance, to mingle with promiscuous society, and frequent places of public amusement, can scarcely fail to become proficients in the school of iniquity. And it should not be forgotten, that what are technically termed innocent amusements, are often pregnant with moral results of tremendous import. Dinah went out to see the daughters of the land. (Gen. xxxiv., 1.) Her personal attractions won the heart of Shechem, and led to an illicit connection ; then came a deep, designing and dissimbed act of villany, and, lastly, a general and horrid massacre of all the male inhabitants of the city.

The wicked and scandalous conduct of Eli's sons was reputed to their father's criminal indulgence : " His sons made themselves vile, and

he restrained them not." Restraint was practicable, and he who allows wicked indulgences to exist when he has the power of preventing them, becomes partaker of other men's sins, and will be dealt with accordingly. Family government does not end with restraint: duty requires that the domestics sanctify the Sabbath, frequent the house of God, engage in the act of public worship, and practise the virtues of justice, temperance and sobriety.

The value of home influence for both worlds can hardly be over-rated. Like the Sabbath, wedded life is a precious relic and reminiscence of Eden, where it appears in any near resemblance to its true ideal. No other institution of human society is fraught with equal blessing. The family is the primal type of social organization, and that which alone can claim to be based on divine authority. Any violation of its sanctities or weakening of its ties must militate against the welfare of individuals and of nations; any strengthening of its hold upon the human heart, and realization of its true spirit and design, will greatly tend to promote the happiness and elevation of mankind.

Three things, at least, are necessary to the building up the character of a well regulated family, *Authority, Affection, Religion.* Without Authority there will be neither peace nor order;

without Affection there will be no tenderness, no warmth, no mutual delight and joy; without Religion the other elements can only exist in a lower degree, while all the very noblest objects contemplated in its institution will be unrecognized and unattained. Happy the home whose borders are undivided by rebellion and mis-rule; whose welcome portals furnish a calm retreat from the storms and tempests of life; in whose bosom all the tenderest impulses, sympathies, and sensibilities of the human breast find their due encouragement and solace, their congenial sphere. Happy the home which enshrines and exercises all the sweet amenities of life: fellowship in sorrow, fellowship in joy, mutual confidence and respect, eager emulation in all good offices, elevating communion, attachments strong and pure, and love that never fails. Happiest of all when the Friend of Mary and Martha and Lazarus "abides in the house," and the apostle's idea is realized of "the church in the house;" its daily life being so ordered upon christian principles, and so pervaded by a christian tone and spirit, that the earthly association becomes a sanctified discipline for, and earnest of, heaven.

THE INFLUENCE OF EXAMPLE.

Household religion may be promoted by the influence of example. It is a prevailing

law in nature for brutes instinctively to copy the actions of their species. Man gathers knowledge from external objects, and tries to improve upon what others have done. Minds possess the mysterious power of assimilation, and morals are not unfrequently the transcript of others ; hence, no man can be solitary, good or bad. The contagion of vice, or the influence of virtue, is quickly communicated. Living models of excellence daily set before our eyes, can scarcely fail to win attention and excite emulation ; and if good example shines in one place more than another, it is in the seclusion of domestic life. In the walks of commerce, or the bustle of business, man has to be seen, for he has to “provide things honest in the sight of all men :” but there his stay is short, his demeanor cautious and circumspect. But in the bosom of his family his character is fairly developed: here his example meets every eye, and attracts the attention of every spectator ; they see him as an Israelite indeed—“a man on earth devoted to the skies.” Such was the service David set before him in his daily life among his family. “I will walk within my house with a perfect heart; I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes; I hate the work of them that turn aside, it shall not cleave unto me.” (Ps. ci., 3.) Those who wish to be a

blessing to their households, should themselves be rich in blessings, abounding in all good things. Their characters should be models for others. The levity of their children's disposition should be curbed by the habitual seriousness of their own, and their conduct generally towards all their domestics so consistent, that with the Apostle they may say, "Those things which ye have both learned and received, and seen in me, do ; and the God of peace shall be with you."

CHAPTER VI.

FAMILY WORSHIP—THE CONSTANT AND DEVOUT USE OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

Almighty God, in condescension to our fallen condition, has been pleased to reveal to us what the instincts of reason or the force of example never could have furnished us with, that is, a declaration of His will; a copy of His mind; a transcript of His nature. To be ignorant of these truths is to be ignorant of the requirements of religion.

It was because the pagan world “did not like to retain God in their knowledge” that God gave them over to a reprobate mind. The knowledge of the truth constitutes the whole difference betwixt savage and civilized society; for to the improvement of the mind all nations have owed the improvement of condition. The comforts and conveniences of life, useful acts, salutary laws, and good governments, are all the products of knowledge. Ignorant men may be made enthusiasts, they may be made superstitious; but before they can be made rational, steady and consistent Christians, they must be enlightened.

The doctrines and requirements of holy writ we are explicitly enjoined to teach diligently to our children. *When thou liest down and when thou risest up*, is the law on this point. A cordial reception of the word of truth—the submission of our hearts and lives to its teachings—must indeed be regarded as essential to the right discharge of the varied duties which man owes to God and his fellow men. The law of the Lord is perfect, *converting the soul*; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. Here God, our maker, stands revealed in all the attributes and perfections of His character—in all the requirements of His truth and will. Here the plan of salvation is, in all its simplicity and energy and fullness, made known and enforced. Here is to be found whatever is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. How important it is, then, that our children (from earliest infancy), that all intrusted to our care; be familiarized with the truths thus essential to their highest welfare, and requisite as a lamp unto their feet and a light unto their path: and where, we ask, can this be more interestingly or more impressively done than when surrounding the domestic altar, where the sanctions of worship unite with the endearments of social life in rendering the mind more

directly susceptible of the influence and control of religious truth? The domestic form, too, in which much that is instructive and admonitory in holy scripture is presented to our view. The narratives there given of parental fidelity and its beneficial results; of parental remissness and its consequent evil; of filial piety as rewarded by God, and filial disobedience in connection with its curse, seem to refer to the domestic altar as a place where truths of this kind may be most appropriately and efficiently enforced. How much, also, do parents and masters, as well as their dependants, need line upon line, precept upon precept, on the doctrines and duties of religion. Common as is the act of reading the scriptures, and liable thereby to be undervalued, it must not be forgotten that our deepest and richest instruction comes from this source; and, therefore, the most reverential guard should be placed around this part of our domestic religious service. Where there is a taste for music and singing, let it be sanctified by a morning and evening hymn, that the little church in the house may have its full service in instruction, and prayer, and praise.

PRAYER.

Another important duty, and one that contributes very largely to the establishment and

furtherance of family religion, is prayer. There are few persons such novices in religion as not to know that prayer is personally beneficial to us. It averts many evils and procures for us many blessings. By it we draw nigh to God, pour out our hearts before him, and secure his approbation: for the prayer of the upright is his delight.

Where prayer is restrained, duties remain unfulfilled, privileges unenjoyed, happiness unfelt, and heaven, with all its glories, eternally forfeited. God has made it imperative that we offer up prayers, supplications and intercessions for all men, and has he no disposition to answer us? Must our sympathies, in the behalf of others, be awakened in vain, or only to return into our own bosom disappointed and sore grieved? No; on a subject in which our dearest interests are involved, we are not left to such doubtful conjecture. The Bible abounds with facts and promises of the most encouraging character. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." How powerful were the pleadings of the father of the faithful on behalf of the impious Sodom and Gomorrah, and how inexpressibly gracious and condescending were the answers of God to him in reference to those awfully depraved cities. When a son was promised to Abraham

in his old age, he, fearing that his former son would be overlooked amidst the profusion of favors prepared for the latter, said unto God, "O that Ishmael might live before Thee!" and the divine answer was, "I have heard thee: behold, I have blessed him." When the reiterated murmurings of Israel had so far provoked God, as to lead Him to threaten to exterminate them and their whole race, Moses interposed and interceded, saying, "Pardon, I beseech Thee, the iniquity of this people;" and the Lord said, "I have pardoned according to thy word." Upon another occasion, under appalling apprehensions of the displeasure of the Almighty for their great obstinacy in asking a king, they appealed to Samuel, saying, "Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not;" and he said, "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you." (1st Sam. xii., 23.) With such examples before our eyes, examples drawn from the records of infallible truth, who can estimate the power and importance of such an exercise, daily brought to bear upon our family training and example? Who can estimate the folly of a parent attempting to train up the members of a numerous family in the way they should go, without a family altar or family sacrifice? Any professedly christian

parent who did not pray for his children and domestics, would be a paradox too preposterous for credibility, but it is to be lamented that many may be found who totally neglect to pray with them.

The domestic union, though fraught with many peculiar joys and interests, is liable to its own peculiar temptations. Whatever relations we sustain, or whatever state of life we live in a family, we are liable to come into frequent collision in points of difference in the minds and tempers of those who live with us, however dear they may be to us as relatives, or however much we may respect them as domestics. We shall regard ourselves as suffering from them, and they may consider themselves as being tried by us; and many a word that had better never have been spoken may have passed on either side, a word that either side would gladly, if it were possible, forget.

But oh, how this tendency is lessened, where all parties concerned meet before the throne of grace, taking common ground, confess their common sin, and plead for the extension of one common mercy. They all feel that unkind tempers are totally inconsistent with a lowly approach to the Majesty of heaven. Plain and open prayer and open sin cannot go on

together ; the one or the other must soon be given up. Prayer is also a bond of union, an outlet affording a scope for the deep and delicate affections of the heart. Many children and domestics have, while kneeling at family worship, been deeply affected, in hearing petition after petition offered up to God in their own behalf, and have often retired subdued and softened from the scene.

THE TIME FOR FAMILY DEVOTION.

The service having been arranged, next in importance is the most convenient and proper time for the exercise. Morning and evening of each day may be regarded as the most appropriate seasons for domestic worship.

The required presentation under the Mosaic economy of the morning and evening sacrifice may be an intimation of the will of God in respect of this. Morning and evening continually were the priests to offer burnt offerings unto the Lord ; to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even. "Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice." These natural divisions of our time seem of themselves to summon to the performance of religious duty. The sun rising in brightness, cometh out of his chamber, rejoicing as a young man to run a race, diffusing

far and wide the light of heaven, seems almost audibly to call upon everything that hath breath, to praise and magnify the Lord; while the shades of evening invite us to wanted and refreshing rest, under the watchful care of Him whose eyelids never close.

The most convenient time for the several members of the family, should be decided upon for the performance of religious worship, and conscientiously and rigidly adhered to. With many years' experience, we have found the most suitable time to be immediately before breakfast in the morning, and immediately after supper in the evening. These seasons of domestic worship should be held sacred, allowing of no interruption. Extremes of haste and tediousness should be avoided. Hurried worship indicates an undevotional spirit, and borders on irreverence and presumption. The scriptures should be read, not promiscuously, but in order: the New Testament in the morning, and the Old Testament in the evening, judiciously omitting such portions not intended for domestic edification. A somewhat slow and emphatic manner of reading, affording time for thinking on the great and blessed truths which are inculcated, should be observed. The religion of the Bible is intended to pervade and sanctify everything we do, and every motive by which

we leave a thing undone. It is intended to sweeten every temper, animate every glance of the eye, soften every rugged point of contact. It must determine what ought to be done first, and what last ; what ought to be done at all hazards, and what ought not to be done at all. It is not something apart from our wisdom, affection, prudence, sense of propriety, and principles of order, but rather the soul and strength of them all.

The neglect of family religion has a more desolating effect upon the cause of godliness in general, than any other sin of omission whatever. God's constitution is violated, and individuals are out of the reach of pastoral oversight. God "setteth the solitary in families" in order that those families may replenish His house with worshippers and heaven with glorified saints. But the neglector of family worship is not a common sinner, he is not one that sins and dies alone. He is like one that sinks the ship in which he is sailing, engulfing his fellow-passengers in his own ruin.

THE CONFERENCE ADDRESS.

In the rules of the Wesleyan Church—all of which, in the estimation of its founders, we are taught of God to observe, and which His spirit writes on every truly awakened heart—the duty of family prayer occupies a very prominent

position. The Conference, as the collective pastorate, has repeatedly urged the attention of its members, to erect a family altar on which morning and evening sacrifices shall be duly offered. To train children and dependents in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and to preserve fidelity and affection in the exercise of all salutary restraint and discipline, is the imperative and indispensable office of everyone to whom the God of the families of the whole earth has intrusted a domestic charge. "Let it be your prayer and labour, that your families may be decidedly Christian; sacred inclosures dedicated, in the wilderness of this world, to God; nurseries of the church from which may be trees planted, such trees of righteousness as when your own leaf has withered, shall stand in the courts of the Lord, and flourish in the house of our God. Domestic heathenism cannot be consistent with individual piety. Family prayer is necessary to obtain the sanctification of our mutual relationships, and of our family joys and sorrows. It is a safeguard against sin. And, what is more than all, it brings down upon what ought to be a church in our house, a holy influence which prepares both parents and children for their various places in the church catholic, which is the aggregate of all household churches."

CHAPTER VII.

DOMESTIC RELATIONSHIPS.

In the composition of a religious household, where children and domestics form the circle, there is one fact that cannot be ignored—all are not equal, neither in the domestic economy nor in the covenant relationship. Our children are given as a heritage, along with certain well-defined conditions, which conditions cannot be omitted with impunity; whereas domestics are subjects of convenience—they are on hire. From social respect, or self-interest, they may conform to the required rules of the household, practically they may be religious or otherwise. When the convenience is served, the connection dissolves, and they become members of another circle, with which we have no liberty to interfere.

MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

We are here reminded of that diversity of rank which has prevailed in the world from the earliest ages. Some men of limited attainments contend that, as we are all the offspring of one

common parent, that we have equal right to all the blessings of Providence, and that there ought to be perfect equality with regard to property and condition. But such theories are vain and impracticable. Mankind differ immensely in their mental faculties and endowments. It would appear as if some people were intended to think, to plan and direct, while others are so dull and heavy at observing anything, that they stand in the way of progress, and never excel. Were all men equal to-day, they would not be so to-morrow. The ignorant and foolish can never be placed on a permanent equality with wise men; men of questionable honesty with men of integrity and uprightness. "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill." (Eccl. ix., 11.) Nevertheless, in consequence of the depravity of human nature, it has given rise to feelings and actions alike dishonorable to God and man. In many instances the rich have treated the poor, not only with neglect and indifference, but with scorn and contempt. On the other hand, the poor have often regarded their wealthy neighbors with envy, have coveted their property, and used unlawful means to possess it.

The relation between master and servant has not always been of the happiest character. How many masters, having stipulated for a certain amount of labor, are anxious only to secure the strict fulfilment of the contract on the part of the servant; are regardless of the welfare of the servant, whether he be ignorant or intelligent, pious or wicked, happy or miserable, and, finally, whether he be lost or saved. At the same time, many a servant desires and aims at nothing more than to obtain his wages and avoid severe censure. True religion corrects these evils. It produces a spirit of justice, equity and love. It inspires the mind with the fear of God, and a supreme regard for His authority. It renders the rich man the guardian and benefactor of the poor, and it makes the poor cheerful, contented and honest. It creates in the master an affectionate interest in the welfare of his servants, especially their religious welfare; and it renders the servant faithful and diligent, intent upon promoting his master's honor and advantage. It will not suffer him to spend his time in indolence, nor waste his master's goods; nor will it tolerate a spirit of insolence or insubordination. Such is the conduct enjoined by the teaching of the New Testament. How beautifully do we find all this exemplified in the primitive ages. When

Boaz, a Jewish farmer, went into his harvest field, he did not approach his servants with a sullen and haughty reserve, or uttering passionate invectives, nor was his presence an interruption of their pious cheerfulness. He said unto the reapers, "The Lord be with you," and they answered, "The Lord bless thee." (Ruth ii., 4.) A master thus invoking blessings upon his servants, could not treat them with injustice or unkindness; and servants who thus reciprocated the pious benediction of their master, could not injure his property or neglect their duty.

THE CENTURION AT CAPERNAUM.

We have another illustration in the centurion and his servant at Capernaum (a centurion was an officer in the Roman army in command of a hundred men). It is said that "He had a servant who was dear to him," and when he was sick and ready to die, "being," as St. Matthew states, "afflicted with the palsy and grievously tormented," his master's heart yearned over him, and he used every means to obtain for him relief and recovery. All previous efforts having so far failed, he makes application to the Lord Jesus for the exercise of His healing power.

The narrative does not inform us by what means the servant had gained such an affectionate hold of his master as to become so "dear to him." It may have been his happy and cheerful consistency, and the uniform attention to the duties and religious obligations of every day life. He had great influence with his master. Most likely it was through the pious zeal of this "dear servant" that the master had been led to abandon heathenism and embrace the Jewish religion, and become a lover of its sacred and divine records. If so, do we wonder at such a servant being dear to such a master? When it is said that the servant was "dear" to his master, a word is used which signifies esteem and honor, as well as affection; and when the centurion says, "My servant shall be healed," he does not use a term expressive of humiliation and servitude, but of tender endearment, as if he had said, "My child shall be healed." It is evident their hearts clave to each other, as more than human friendship subsisted between them. Piety was doubtless the bond of their union. The Holy Spirit creates in all His children a oneness of feeling, purpose and thought, so that, notwithstanding their disparity of rank, attainment, and natural character, they enjoy the true communion of saints. Let no one suppose

that this spiritual equality and affection is subversive of order or just authority. The most perfect of all government is the government of holy love. This remark will apply to both families and the Church. Ecclesiastical discipline was never more perfect than at Jerusalem, "when the whole multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul." In proportion as men are brought under the influence of religion, so will they "obey civil governors for the Lord's sake;" and those who are in a state of servitude, in "obeying their masters, serve the Lord Christ."

There is no obedience like this, as the centurion himself proved. His piety and kindness, so far from impairing his authority, enhanced and intensified it. And the probability is, that a master more respected, or an officer more efficient, did not then exist. The obedience which he received from all under his charge was remarkable for its promptitude and cheerfulness. Speaking of his authority as an officer, he himself remarks, "I say to one soldier, go, and he goeth, and to another, come, and he cometh; and to my servant, do this, and he doeth it." Many a man vested with official authority deems it requisite to assume an artificial sternness, and even to use profane language, that he may command due respect

and obedience ; but it may be justly questioned whether any of these ungodly pretenders are, in fact, clothed with half the authority exercised by this very devout soldier. Personal religion, in whatever station it moves, gives clearness and vigor to the understanding, power and tenderness to the conscience; it enables its possessor to meet even painful duties with calmness and dignity, and his prayers bring down the blessing of God upon his entire path.

PHILEMON, AND ONESIMUS HIS SERVANT.

The epistle to Philemon is a representative case of an unconverted man-servant residing with a religious family. The religious element pervading the house is not congenial to his carnal mind ; its discipline is regarded as obtrusive and arbitrary. To observe the Sabbath as an holiday, and go to church when convenient, he has no objection, but to be required to attend family prayer and the devout reading of the holy scriptures twice a day during the week, is a yoke too intolerable to endure, and his spirit rises in hostility against it. He cannot see what enjoyment there is, nor what advantage is to be derived from making the rule so imperative. The cheerful tones and happy spirits of the family, with the members of the Church that meet in Philemon's house,

he despises in his heart, and, if he could, would secretly frown them down. Soon his unhappy spirit grew into conspiracy and rebellion against his master's authority and claims. His ungodliness soon became obstinate wickedness; he was not only unprofitable, but injurious, until at length he threw off all restraint and ran away from his master's service, and in order to avoid detection fled to Rome. In this rash action he committed a great sin of presumptuous daring, by ignoring the goodness, and repudiating the claims, of divine providence. A great privilege had been conferred upon him in placing him in the house of Philemon. Few such families then existed, for while darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people, light was in the dwelling in which it was his happiness to live. To disparage such advantages, and contemptuously to run away, was disreputable in the extreme. But in the perils of travel, whether by sea or land, the sun was not allowed to smite him by day nor the moon by night. At length he is at the summit of his ambition—the great city at that time the metropolis of the world. In place of finding there the sum of all human happiness, it was the place where Satan eminently had his seat, and almost reigned supreme. (Rom. i., 28-32.) Many people mistake the

nature of true happiness as well as the means to obtain it. Because many crowd in at the wide gate and throng the broad road, we are not to suppose that they are the wisest and happiest people on earth.

Onesimus, while in Rome,—without a home or a friend, his little patrimony all gone,—began to be in want, and, like the prodigal in a far country, to reflect on his condition. The hired house of the apostle with free access was open to him. In the extremity of destitution, he goes and makes known to him an account of his life and adventures. A review so searching, and a confession so penitential, was evidently from a godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation. The spirit of grace, though slighted and grieved, had not given him up and departed, but was taking advantage of his altered circumstances in effecting a change in his life and character. Being renewed in the spirit of his mind, the apostle regards him as his spiritual child and brother beloved. Though converted and made a new creature, yet his circumstances were very critical and delicate. He had involved himself in moral and legal difficulties in running away, but was now willing to return and make good, if possible, for the trespass he had committed, if Philemon was willing to receive him and accept

his conditions. To effect a reconciliation, and obtain for him a favorable reception with his master, the apostle wrote the epistle to Philemon, and sent it by him, thus making his return a subject of special pleading; at the same time making himself responsible, not only for his past indebtedness, but for his future conduct. The apostle's estimate of a religious servant is great. They are the source of unrestricted confidence and general prosperity.

The heathen master of Joseph in Egypt, saw that the Lord was with Joseph, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. (Gen. xxxix., 3.) Moses also adds, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field. Great temporal profits have often resulted to families from the prudence and integrity of intelligent and pious servants, and the spiritual profit arising from the examples, prayers and conversation of such persons has, in many cases, been strikingly manifested. Whole families, in some instances, have been brought out of darkness into light by the instrumentality of a pious servant. Many such cases are recorded in the Wesleyan magazines.

Our Lord appeared in the form of a servant. The apostle directs that "Servants adorn the

doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ." (Col. iii., 22.) Thus it is that christianity invests even the ordinary duties of life with a character of holiness. They are to be discharged with purity of affection and joyous simplicity of purpose; and the Lord Jesus deigns to accept them as acts of direct obedience to His will, which He will reward with everlasting treasure in heaven.

FEMALE SERVANTS.

In this relationship the scriptures do not present so extensive a supply of diversified circumstances for illustration as in the relation of masters and men-servants. We must therefore seek our information in the common walks of everyday life.

It is a very important consideration to a family when they judge it necessary to take a stranger every now and then into their circle. Such persons may be worthy of confidence, if truthful and honest; they may contribute

much to the comfort and welfare of the house, if orderly and economical; they may make a happy home for themselves and all concerned, if pious, intelligent and respectful: but if these essential qualities to peace and harmony are lacking, what a bedlam of confusion and uproar must, occasionally, unavoidably occur! What is there more degrading to the character of a servant than wilful, deliberate lying? and what more irritating to the ruler of the house than no confidence in what the servant says? How perplexing it must be to a mistress, if, when out, any duties she wishes attended to during her absence are neglected, and disorder and loss the consequence? How far it may be prudential to refer to the habits of such may be questionable: by doing so we may offend against the generation of those who are struggling hard to pursue a more honorable course through life. The unfortunate may have been objects more to be pitied than blamed. Many of them, no doubt, never knew what the rules and requirements of home meant, nor what the comforts of home were like, until they left their homeless home under the cravings of appetite and the influence of stern authority, and found themselves beneath the fostering care of those well reported for their good works, "Who have brought up children, lodged

strangers, washed the saints' feet, relieved the afflicted, and diligently followed every good work." (1 Tim. v., 10.) Some of these may never have had an opportunity to break away from the snares of youth, and rise in moral and social virtue, and gain a character and reputation that would place them above the unscrupulous jealousies of the fearful and unbelieving. Is there not a great lack of interest prevailing among us in reference to the principles and habits of social life? Notwithstanding our noble educational facilities, and in the absence of the factory system, or any other employment of children on a large scale, which serves as an apology for the educational defects of some countries, yet what little provision is made for their religious or mental improvement. How few are provided with suitable books for reading, by which they may be instructed in their personal and domestic duties, in the formation of their characters, and regulation of their lives. How few are provided with religious accommodation in our churches. Shelter and protection is provided for our cattle suitable to their requirements, but our servants have no place appointed to which they are respectfully invited. If they venture to go to hear words whereby they may be saved, or to have their mind stirred up by way of

remembrance, they are very likely to obtrude upon the privacy of some family, and must be repulsed, or expose themselves to the jeering criticisms of the suspicious. This, to a servant who has been brought up under the watchful care of religious parents, is exceedingly repulsive and disorderly. It places her respect for the family and her situation at a great discount; and however suited she may be to her duties, yet no considerations of an earthly nature will be deemed a sufficient equivalent for a restriction in religious matters.

How pleasant a reflection, just now, to pass in review the interesting associations of early life, when, "in the beautiful house in which our fathers worshipped," whole families, including business hands, domestic servants, parents and children, all congregated in one or more adjoining pews, furnished with books and other conveniences to aid in the worship of Almighty God: this system prevailing on an extensive scale among the religious families of the place. In the homes of some families a monthly periodical would be placed, embracing morality, religion, and general literature suitable to the wants and capacities of the parties concerned. The one designed for the use of those in the kitchen would frequently contain important chapters upon the duties of servants, memoirs

of good servants, etc. A volume of such now lies before me, containing chapters on "Cleanliness," "Punctuality," "Our Homes," "Self," "Why do people read?" etc. Such interest taken in domestic management makes the servants contented and happy; they see they are not slighted, but that their welfare is studied and provided for; and although done at little cost, the effects upon all parties are inconceivable and lasting. The day of eternity will reveal the fruit.

But is there no simple and easy method of raising the standard of social and domestic life of those unhappy, down-trodden victims of careless and criminal neglect? The squalid poverty, with its accompanying evidence of rudeness and rags, acts as a barrier against all respectful considerations. To the honor of Hamilton, there are hospitals for the fatherless and deserted, but little or none to those who make any pretensions of a home. Many towns and country places have no available help for them. According to the instincts of nature and the law of God, such people may themselves soon become wives and mothers: what a fearful state of things to contemplate to commence life and the responsibilities of the home with, when not only a succession, but a multiplication, of such unhappy events may

be perpetrated. Will not some self-denying christian lady haste to the rescue, and give such the benefit of her piety, her intellect and experience, by acting the part of a mother? By being taught to read they will have access to the Bible; its truths will enlighten and invigorate; "by taking heed to its precepts, it will teach them how to cleanse their way." It will show them the path of life, and where they may enjoy pleasures for evermore. The blessedness and enjoyments arising from a knowledge and possession of these things, will be theirs and their children's after them. But the reward and honor of communicating them will be yours. At the last day, when the reward of every person's work shall be given, your special and extraordinary efforts of patient self-denial, will be revealed, with this honorable commendation: "For as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my little ones, ye have done it unto me."

In a free country like this, in which it is our happiness to live, servants can generally choose situations for themselves. Those who fear God will be very careful not to place themselves in the families of profane people; they will prefer opportunities of christian fellowship, with a regular attendance upon religious ordinances dispensed by spiritual men, before

all considerations of an earthly nature. Servants so regulated will be a great boon to themselves and the entire household, as well as a great source of satisfaction and comfort in all matters requiring trust and confidence in household management.

THE YOUNG MAN FROM HOME.

The young man desirous to push his way into life and be the architect of his own fortune, not only sacrifices the pleasures and endearments of home, but exposes himself to the temptations and allurements of untried life abroad. The man who went from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves, who wounded him, and stripped him of his raiment, leaving him half dead. Similar calamities have crossed the path of many young men, on their first adventures from city to city. They should be very cautious how they listen to the counsel of the ungodly, or stand in the way of sinners, or sit upon the seat of the scornful. There is also caution required, and better council needed, in the exciting objects of life. Let us for a moment look on the tendencies of events of the present day. Does not much of the literature in use among us engender false notions of human capability and duty? Fame is very

often pictured before the youthful gaze in the most attractive colors. Imagination spreads her pinions, and pants to rise and revel in those high honors which Fortune with a lavish hand has scattered about her path. Listening and admiring youth are told amid exciting applause that they, too, may reach those elevations of greatness, because others have done so before them. Books on "Self-help," the "Lives of Great Men," the "Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties," and many of the public lectures and platform speeches of the age, tend to foster the conviction, that "what others have done, all may accomplish." The effect may be sometimes to cheer a jaded spirit in its pursuit to attain a high standard of mental and moral excellence amid the turmoil of business; but many have been inspired with erroneous views of their own capacity, and the design of an All-wise Providence concerning them, and produced discontent with their condition in life, and neglect of the legitimate means surrounding them of improving themselves and others.

There is a providence in human destiny. High on the eternal throne, God reigns and governs according to the principles of His glorious administration and man's free agency. All wisdom proceedeth from Him. Men who

change the aspect of the world, give a new direction to science, or arouse the religious spirit of a nation, are not mere accidents in the battlefield of life, but are set apart by Him who "giveth to every man severally as He will." Let not the young man behind the counter, or guiding the plough, cover his face with sadness as he gazes up to the positions where the favored few have climbed, but with stout heart and diligent hand pursue his appointed task, and thereby fulfil the designs of God concerning him.

Mistaken views of human capacity interfere greatly with the requirements of the age. The true secret of success is to use the power you have, and work while it is called to-day; then, if enlarged spheres of usefulness and honor open up before you, and your improved faculties of mind and character are equal to the undertaking, rise with them—God will train His illustrious ones for His work, and lead them forth to duty. Life is too short for mere theorizing. Its duties are numerous and pressing; its responsibilities are definite and solemn; its glories are grand and unending. A cheerful and earnest improvement of the present for human good and the Saviour's glory, will secure a happy future in time and deathless honors in eternity.

The young man from home should seek for shelter in his temporary home, where the name of God is held sacred, and where there is a family altar erected, where the tone of feeling and the habits of life derive their inspiration. He should take care that such privileges are not slighted by considering them troublesome or interfering with business, the plea of some important engagement, or that they are dull and uninteresting, with other excuses, urged to get away from them. Such evasions will soon tell their own melancholy story upon the spiritual life and character of any young man. Over-indulgence in a morning, or staying out at night until the appointed hour for family worship is past, are sure tokens of spiritual weakness: spiritual lassitude has no heart for high and honorable service, but amidst plenty will languish, sicken and die. It will be greatly to his advantage to be in full sympathy with the established arrangements of the household; to have his own little interests so adjusted that whenever the signal is given for domestic worship, he, with a cheerful promptitude, should enter upon its duties with sweet delight. The result will soon be self-evident in the emotion of a grateful heart and a cheerful countenance. He will be like the sun coming out of his chamber, rejoicing as a young man to run a race.

By systematic and conscientious devotedness to God and the interests of His cause, he secures a deep interest in the divine protection and guidance and blessing. He will appoint the bounds of his habitation, choose his inheritance for him, and make whatsoever he doeth to prosper. A young man should be very attentive to the claims of his Bible. No disciple can expect to succeed in religion unless he cultivates intimate acquaintance with the mind and will of God. How is he to do the will of God unless he knows what that will is, and how is he to know it, unless he reads, marks, and inwardly digests it?—two chapters, at least, should be read every day.

I have known men so true to their purpose in this respect that no circumstances, however urgent, would be allowed to interfere. Sometimes, after a day of great fatigue and weariness, nature sinks involuntarily into the arms of sleep; he, like a faithful sentinel who will not sleep at his post, takes the light in one hand and the Bible in the other, and paces the room until the self-imposed task is completed.

CHAPTER VIII.

ABODES AND HABITS.

One of the first and most important steps, in securing the permanent wellbeing of a christian household, is the judicious choice of a suitable location. Parents that rush with their families to crowded city or town, and without sufficient caution fix their dwelling-place, where both their health and morals are in danger of being injured, and where there is no protection from the surrounding influences of street associations and pastimes, make a great mistake. Such influences will act like a moral pestilence, both upon their health and character, and will, in all likelihood, involve them (unless an interposing Providence mercifully prevents) in irretrevable ruin. A situation should be selected where the atmosphere is pure; where the pure light of heaven is in full display all the day, "for it is a pleasant thing to see the sun;" in the immediate neighborhood of a good school, and within convenient distance of the public worship of God: also, if possible, where two or three families of kindred sympathies can meet together in each other's

“homes,” as the church in the house, and be “helpers together of each other’s joy.”

There was one characteristic in the Jewish religion deserving our special consideration: that was its frequent washings and sprinklings of garments, vessels, and places, which were made literally clean; its anointing and purifying; its order and arrangement. Although much of it might be ceremonial and typical, it shows us that there is at least an analogy between order and outward purity, and that outward purity must be agreeable to the Divine mind, though God has shown His approval of it rather in a figurative manner, than by making it known in the form of law. Where there is a christian household who are dirty in their persons, and in their houses; irregular in their habits; whose devotions, meals, arrangements, apartments, are all confusion and disorder, it shows plainly that they hold their christian profession very cheaply and inconsistently. Every one must feel that an orderly and clean dwelling, and a well regulated and calmly worked system of household arrangements, is eminently favorable to the worship of God, and will command respect from the family, and sway them into harmony of feeling and conformity of action to whatsoever things are lovely and of good report.

THE CHARACTER AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF LOT
AND HIS FAMILY IN SODOM.

The character and circumstances of Lot and his family in Sodom, afford many striking illustrations of the preceding remarks. Abraham and Lot were relatives. Lot was Abraham's brother's son. His father was dead, and Abraham had been his honorable guardian. Under the wisdom and influence of Abraham, Lot became rich: indeed, the flocks and herds of both had greatly multiplied, so that the land was unable to bear them. The right of pasture had become a subject of painful dispute between the herdmen of the two masters. Abraham is the first to introduce the matter, and endeavor to quell the rising storm. He sought out Lot, and after stating the whole case, said, "Let there be no strife between me and thee, between my herdmen and thy herdmen, *for we be brethren.*" Surely that was sufficient to lead to any sacrifice of feeling, to the sinking of any preferences and rights. Rather than the bond of peace should be broken, Abraham would suffer. The simple fact that they were family relatives ought to put an end to all strife. Abraham does not consult with his servants with a view of strengthening his own cause. He had already

the stronger claim, either to remain where he was, or to choose the direction in which he would move. He might have said to Lot, "The land is too straight for us, we must part. I have looked around and decided to go eastward, and you must go westward. I have cared for you, and assisted you until it is not convenient to do so any more. You must find a new home." Would there have been a single stain upon his reputation of impropriety or unkindness? In this he was the older, the more powerful, yet such was the greatness of his character, that he submitted himself to Lot, saying, "Is not the whole land before thee? * * * If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if thou depart to the right, then I will go to the left." What true greatness! Not that there is either poetry or grandeur about it, but an ordinary circumstance, an everyday occurrence; therefore it seems all the more effective to bring out the real character of the men. And this is the true way to test men. Ordinary men may be wrought up to acts of daring heroism, but only great and good men act nobly in the ordinary affairs of everyday life.

While these two men were discussing the prospects of their future lot, the neighboring landscape presented two widely different scenes.

On one side was a rich and fertile land, green pastures, running brooks, never failing springs of water, and the Jordan rolling in the distance. The inspired writer appears to have been under a special inspiration when describing it. It was like the "Garden of the Lord," it was well watered everywhere. It was like the land of Egypt. And on the other side was comparative barrenness. It was no trifle to a man whose substance consisted mainly in flocks and herds to give up this rich pasture land to another. But Abraham hesitated not. There were other things of graver importance which claimed his attention besides flocks and herds, so he let Lot have the preference.

But what a contrast to this is recorded of the conduct of Lot. How we might have acted under similar circumstances we cannot tell. Perhaps we might have been as weak and base as he was. Abraham possessed those qualities which make the christian gentleman, while Lot betrayed a lack of them. Lot was under great obligations to Abraham. Many years before this, his father died, and Abraham had acted nobly a father's part; had given him powerful protection, good example, wise advice, and beneath his shadow Lot had grown to his present estate. Every young man owes a debt of respect and gratitude to a father who

nobly fills a father's place; but if his father be taken away, and some one generously stands in the father's place, the respectful gratitude he owes to his benefactor is even greater than that he owed to his father.

This was the position of Lot. Had his heart been right, and his actions ruled by noble and generous principles, he would have declined his uncle's offer with a firm hand, and said, "No! I am greatly indebted to you. I am so much younger. Your claim is in every way much stronger, and I have such love and esteem for you that I shall esteem it a privilege to come in second to you." But, alas! Lot did not rise to this. The prize was too great for him to lose, and, in his eagerness to grasp it, he sacrificed those nobler feelings that link us to heaven. There is nothing so much betrays an ignoble character as the greedy seizure of favors at the expense of others, especially where their generosity places them within our reach.

When Lot looked out upon the beautiful scene spread before him, he saw a goodly fortune. In those well-watered pastures his flocks would multiply exceedingly, and he might become one of the wealthiest men of the day. There he would have "good society." He might be in such a position as to be in social

intercourse with the rich, and even be courted by the kings of the cities around him. He might be able to settle his daughters in good families, and make suitable provision for future glory and greatness. He might yet become the father of a great people, leaving his good-natured uncle far behind.

But there was another side : "The men of Sodom were wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." To be tempted, ensnared and corrupted by these men was the risk he had to run ; to be vexed and ruined by them, in character, in family, in fortune, was the fearful price he had to pay. But the desire of wealth, rank and greatness was so pressing that he was determined to run the risk. His subsequent history is so appalling that it seems to be written with a pen dipped in tears, and even at this distance of time it lifts up such a warning voice, and sends such a wave of woe across the ages, as should make every covetous feeling within us sink and die. But, alas ! how little men heed. Even now, they are paying the same dreadful price for the same empty baubles ; and "large profits" and "good settlements," with their associated attractions, lead men down to the Sodoms and Gomorrahs of modern society, where they become bewildered and lost in their own confusions.

It would be a very sad, but instructive study, to follow out the after-lives of some of these unhappy men. These two men were not only brethren, but they were professors of religion, and held distinguished positions in the church of God: Abraham as the "Friend of God," and Lot as "Righteous." Circumstances bring out the latent principles of individual character. Many people pass through life with character undeveloped, because circumstances suitable to the purpose have been absent. These two men acted out what was in them. Each man's conduct was consistent with himself.

Lot has now made his choice, and decided to reside in Sodom; so the household and flocks of these two great men are divided. Abraham and Lot take leave of each other, not knowing when or where they may meet again. Abraham might deliver an affectionate, warning admonition to the man who would be rich; and Lot might have some secret misgivings as to the ultimate results of his new enterprise. For years after he is settled in his new home, all goes on well,—increasing flocks, accumulating wealth, rich acquaintances, and wealthy alliances for his daughters, until his mountain appears strong and immovable. We might watch the movements of Lot as he entered his

new possessions and formed his associations and friends, and wonder what influence they would have upon his religious life and character. He might suppose and fondly hope, that when he went to live among these wicked men, that his pious example, prayers and admonitions, would work some good. Even supposing a desire to do them good had been his chief motive in going to live among them, he would have needed more strength of character and religion than he possessed. Such risks are dangerous even to the most godly and well established. But Lot's motives were worldly, and his character not eminently godly. Day by day his righteous soul was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked. At first he might have shuddered, then submitted quietly, and at length, with a kind of pious sentimentalism, soothed his grief by the vague idea that he was making his fortune and accumulating wealth.

Then, as to his family: true, he had been successful in accomplishing the marriage of some of his daughters to the men of the place. He probably hoped that both would be improved, and both husbands and wives become blest and honorable; but never was more fatal mistake. Instead of raising their husbands to their level, they sank towards the level of

their husbands. What else could be expected ? One feeble woman matched against her husband, and his relatives and connections, immersed in the worldliness and sin of these wicked cities. Had she been disposed to keep up the unequal contest, she would have needed something in addition to natural force of character, developed by the most careful training, and strengthened and fortified by divine grace. So far as we can gather, the daughters of Lot had none of these things, and the probability is, that, after a few feeble and unsuccessful attempts to improve the moral atmosphere of their new homes, they gave up the struggle, and sank into the abounding degradation by which they were surrounded.

From the chronology of our Bibles we have reason to suppose that Lot resided in Sodom about twenty years before the reckoning time came. On a certain evening, three strange looking men came to Sodom. They had been on a friendly visit to Abraham and had enlarged his borders. They had also apprised Abraham of the doomed cities, for the preservation of which he pleaded; and although he did not succeed in averting the wrath of the Almighty from their overthrow, yet he prevailed in having Lot and a part of his family miraculously delivered. Indeed, they might all have been

saved had it not been for their confirmed obstinacy and unbelief. It was with great difficulty that they succeeded in getting the few out of the city; they lingered, so that they had to be taken by the hand and literally forced out. It may be a heavy blow for a wealthy man to lose his fortune. In the morning Lot's flocks and herds were great, and he had possessions of houses, lands, silver and gold; but during the storm of Jehovah's long delayed wrath which swept over the valley, in one day Lot was left all but destitute. This was another evil consequence of the choice he had made long ago. His advantages were now completely gone. All that was left was their memory, a pillar of salt, and three homeless fugitives flying across the plain. Alas! for the uncertainty and vanity of earthly good. Alas! for the mistakes of good men, especially in relation to their families.

We can form but little conception of the agony of the parents when they left the city and commenced their journey across the plain. How the angels reiterated the warning, and the stern command, that on no account should they look behind them, lest they should meet a terrible fate. But the yearnings of a mother's heart were too strong for her. There were, no doubt, many pleasant memories of



bridal song and music, attended by youthful joy and hope, and now her dear daughters, and their husbands, were left behind to a dreadful doom. She was leaving everything dear to the heart of a wife and a mother, and she felt she must take one last farewell look, cost what it may. She made the dreadful venture, and the warm currents of life ceased to flow within her, and there was left a solitary monument standing on the plain, with this warning, "Remember Lot's wife."

It is a proverbial saying among men, that one trouble seldom comes alone. So with Lot, one followed another in rapid succession. But his two unmarried daughters are yet left to him, and with them he may yet have a home and be happy. But alas! alas! tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon. Had it not been better that they had shared the fate of their sisters in the fires of Sodom, or stood petrified and lifeless forms beside their mother. They lived, but it was to involve their father into drunkenness and crime. They became the unholy progenitors of an unholy race, which spread pollution and death for a season, then lost its name for ever among the living.

What a wonderful contrast to all this do we find in the life of Abraham. He accepted the

poorer fortune, but retained with it honor, integrity, benevolence, religion, God. He grew immensely rich, and made his family wealthy and prosperous among the nations of the earth. In his seed the promise of God was fulfilled, and all the nations of the earth blessed. He retained his own piety, by the grace of God; developed a truly noble character, and died at length in a good old age.

The histories of these men are full of important instruction. Abraham's generosity, his retirement under the wings of Providence, his determination to keep close to God at all hazards, earnestly teach us this lesson: that if we are properly affected with the necessity of religion, and the evil influence to which we are continually liable, we shall be anxious to dwell among a people like-minded with ourselves, and to enjoy all the spiritual helps which the christian church supplies. We may sometimes be unavoidably separated from them, but the call of Providence must be very distinct and urgent to justify us in fixing our permanent residence in the midst of moral darkness and depravity, far from the house of God and the assemblies of His people.

How solicitous many parents are for the temporal welfare of their children; seeking to start them well in life, to get them into the

office of a money-making firm, to marry them into wealthy families. This may be laudable enough to a certain extent, only let other considerations be equal, then all may be well. It is not enough that a business house be prosperous; are its principles honest, honorable, upright? It is not sufficient to marry them into certain families, because of wealth, accomplishments or position; have they character for honor, honesty, integrity? Had these things been more freely attended to, how many ruined fortunes and hearts had been saved.

CHAPTER IX.

DIFFICULTIES.

There are no doubt difficulties existing in some families on which it would be a hard and delicate matter to advise, especially to speak with positiveness. It is a delicate case, where the wife is a devoted christian, and the husband is an unconverted worldling, or a conscience-seared wanderer from God's fold, and refuses to sanction morning and evening worship. Alas, this is a condition into which some christian women bring themselves, by entering into prohibited and unblessed unions with the ungodly. Where it is so, it may rather be regarded as a just punishment of sin than as a trial of christian faith and patience. But if it be not thus, I should say to a tried and afflicted wife and mother, rather than hazard a burst of wrath, or keep alive a continual strife and subject of annoyance, it were better to yield, so far at least as the form of family worship is concerned; but oh! do not fail, in the absence of your husband, to gather your children together and present them all to the care and guidance of the God of the families of the whole earth.

THE MOTHER OF THE LATE REV. JOHN SCOTT.

It is recorded of the mother of the late Rev. John Scott, Wesleyan Minister, that being a strong-minded woman, with great energy of character, she began her religious life with a full determination to serve God faithfully. Each morning she called together her children and servants, and such farm laborers as were disengaged, and read and prayed with them. Her husband, not approving of her conduct, would go into the next room, and, cracking his whip, call the men by name, and allot to each his work. Notwithstanding, she maintained daily family worship, and soon the heart of her husband softened, till he, too, was found kneeling among the rest. He sought and found salvation, and died happy in a Saviour's love.

Can we reflect upon the life and character of Job without noting how his domestic circle was beset with the most formidable difficulties. The religious welfare of his large family of seven sons and three daughters, under the fostering influence of an injudicious and sensuous, if not a profane and idolatrous, mother, was a burden of deep and anxious solicitude.

Had David no opposition? Did the members of his household approve of his devotions? Was his wife pleased to behold the expressions

of his fervent zeal for God? No, she eyed him with a scowl of contempt, and accosted him in a strain of insulting and sarcastic impiety: "How glorious was the king of Israel to-day, who uncovered himself in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself."

Such was the impudent and irritating language in which David was addressed, when he was preparing to bless his household.

Daniel, while in charge of one hundred and twenty provinces, could be successful in his government, yet find time and convenience to pray three times a day; and when he knew that a wicked confederacy was formed against him, he yet faltered not in his course, but, with unswerving fidelity and perseverance, kneeled and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

Poverty, severe and exhausting labor, want of early culture, and other unavoidable impediments, may stand in the way of an illiterate christian from aspiring to learning or extensive general knowledge, but no difficulties can effectually prevent his successful pursuit of what is excellent and laudable in human nature.

As true manliness was exemplified in the laborious life of shepherds and herdsmen, as Jacob and Moses, Gideon and David, and by

the apostles of our Lord, so, in modern days, intelligent and noble-minded christian peasants have their souls purified from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and refined and expanded by the rich and holy feelings of experimental religion, by fellowship with saints, and communion with God. It is well known that among the godly poor there are persons who, though unlearned, are wise ; who, though unpolished, are courteous ; who, in want, difficulty, and suffering, are humble and magnanimous ; who, though cramped in their external condition, have an unaffected largeness of heart. Such weak things Almighty God, as the head of His church and the Governor of the world, not unfrequently “ chooses to confound the mighty,” and “ things that are not to bring to nought things that are.”

The late Reverend Thomas Jackson, in the recollections of his own life and times, says : “ On a review of my past life, I find a thousand things which call for my grateful acknowledgments to the Giver of all good. I owe thanks to God especially for my parentage. I was not born to the inheritance of wealth, but was early sent from home to earn my bread as best I might. The consequence was, that I acquired habits of industry from my boyhood, and could never bear to be unemployed. But

for this habit, I could never have passed through the course of hard mental labor, which during a long life has been my providential lot; nor could I have rendered that service to others which I have rendered, however imperfectly, in the study, in the pulpit, in the lecture-room, and through the press. * * * * I trust that God, in the greatness of His mercy, will accept what has been well intended, and forgive what has been defective and faulty."

Dr. Clark once remarked, while speaking upon domestic matters, that there are three things which a working man likes to see when he comes home from work: a clean house, a good fire, and a pleasant look,—the truth of which, all parties concerned will readily admit. But what an amount of forethought, care and industry, is embraced in this, all of which a prudential wife cheerfully realizes, and the duties are easily accomplished. Many of the troubles of the working class are home-grown. Many a fretful, pining, half-starved wife, has herself to blame for a great part of the misery she has to encounter. If she would observe the apostolic injunctions, and be "discreet, chaste, a keeper at home, good and obedient to her own husband," with the duties of home properly attended to, the cause of most of the unhappy conflicts would vanish. A husband

does not like to see his hard earnings wasted, or laid out with little or no judgment, with no power of control in the family, or system in household management. See the children wandering in the streets, forming their characters and habits among swearers and drunkards, gamblers and Sabbath-breakers; they become reckless, headstrong and wicked, because they cannot find companionship or help at home. How can a man be happy amidst such a scene as his home presents, when he returns wearied and tired from his day's labor? and if he cannot find happiness at home, where is he to go in search of it? Do we wonder that he should go to the tavern or saloon, where there is suitable attraction and ready welcome. We would that such unhappy cases were less numerous.

JOHN BUNYAN.

There is a providence in human destiny. The great masters in religion, science and literature, have, in many cases, been raised from the humblest classes. The mighty agencies by which progress has been effected in the different departments of earthly affairs, have been of comparatively mean origin. God frequently works from the bottom upwards. See, in John Bunyan, a poor and unsuccessful young man taking to himself a wife. His bride as

poor as himself ; but she was the child of godly parents. Her father bequeathed to her the only dowry he had to leave her, the memory of his own good name, and two little books—*The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven*, and *The Practice of Piety*. As to household stuff, they had not, according to the bridegroom's account, so much as a dish or a spoon between them. Yet those two volumes have redeemed her memory from oblivion, whilst damsels dowered with gold are forgotten and unknown. This good woman urged her husband to read ; and, by her intreaties, he recovered the art which he had almost lost. She told him, moreover, as only a loving wife can, of her godly father and his holy life, until his heart was impressed by the affecting tale. Of his early life he tells us that he had but few equals, both for swearing, cursing, lying, and blaspheming the holy name of God, and that he was the ringleader in all manner of vice and ungodliness. But who is not willing to bless the memory of Bunyan's wife ; but for her promptings and her humble marriage portion of two books, we should never have had his glorious dreams, besides sixty distinct publications which have astonished the world by their simplicity and power.

As a means of religious edification in the promotion of intelligent piety, and the enlarged

and ever extending influence by which your interesting charge is swayed to duty and affection, have some manual of devotion at hand, and in your closet some book of choice christian biography under careful perusal, that you may see how others have thought and felt and acted in the everchanging trials of their lot. See how they read their Bible, and how they understood it ; mark what clear views they had of their high calling and how they pursued its prize; how highly they esteemed heavenly-mindedness, and how they gained it. In addition to the regular scripture lessons of the day at the family altar, frequently,

While quiet in your house you sit,
That book be your companion still;
Your joy its sayings to repeat,
Talk o'er the record of His will,
And search the oracles divine,
Till every heartfelt word be thine.

Have no sympathy with those who scoff at the multitude of religious books. An unreading, unthinking religion, is generally an unheavenly one ; and especially disregard those who say we have enough of commentaries and expositions, for of these works we never can have enough. The most profound, heavenly, holy, and beauteous thoughts of good men are little more, when attentively considered, than expositions or illustrations of scripture ; and as

long as the word of God shall be a subject of human contemplation, so long it is likely to call forth an accumulation of volumes which shall show what vast realms of sunshine may be filled from one centre of light.

To prefer, as is commonly done, the improvement of our fortune to the improvement of our souls, is a gross blunder; an illiberal, grovelling, self-degrading mistake, of which all rational and immortal natures ought to be ashamed. A mind self-cultivated, purified, enriched, and adorned in a manner as the sacred scriptures instruct, is the noblest possession a human being can attain to.

CHAPTER X.

THE ADVANTAGES OF FAMILY RELIGION.

One of the many advantages of systematic family religious training is hereditary piety.

It has often been remarked, and no doubt justly, that the large proportion of the servants of God, who have been eminent for their devotion and usefulness, have been brought to religious decision in early life. There may be some striking exceptions to the contrary. Nevertheless, the general rule holds good. As it was in the Old Testament history, so it has been in the history of christianity. Samuel was consecrated to God and his service from his infancy. Jeremiah was but a youth when the God of his childhood called him to fill the office of a prophet under the most difficult and perilous conditions. All that was good in David, grew out of the promise of his youthful prime. The grandeur of Daniel's character was but the full development of his early consecration; and the most majestic and impressive of all the sons of Israel, under the Old Testament dispensation, our Lord's immediate forerunner, the Baptist, was filled with the

Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. In like manner, Saul of Tarsus tells us that his manner of life, from his youth, was of the strictest sect of the religion of the Jews. It is true that, as a young man, he persecuted the people of God, even to the death. He was, as he describes himself, a blasphemer, persecutor and injurer. But he was never vicious, even in his worst and maddest course as persecutor. He thought he was doing God service, and obtained mercy on the ground that he did it "ignorantly and in unbelief." Self-righteous and unrelenting as he was in his bigotry, he had maintained not only his Jewish faith, but his moral purity; as touching the law, he himself declares that he was blameless. When he speaks of his tender love for Timothy, of their mutual, passionate affection each for the other, and of his remembrance of the unfeigned faith that was in Timothy, and which dwelt first in his grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice,—he well understood the character of a Jewish education, with all the details of family religious training,— "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them, and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

THE SEED OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

The statement in Isaiah lix., 21, is in accordance with the promises, which frequently occur in the scriptures, that God would bless the posterity of His people, showing mercy unto thousands (that is, thousands of generations) of them that love Him, and keep His commandments. (Deut. iv., 37-40; vii., 9; xxix., 1. Ps. lxxxix., 24-36.) There is no promise of the Bible that is more full of consolation to the pious, or has been more strikingly fulfilled, than this. And though it is true that not *all* the children of godly parents become truly pious,—though there are instances where they are signally wicked and abandoned,—yet it is also true, that rich, spiritual blessings *are* imparted to the posterity of those who serve God, and keep His commandments. The following facts are pretty firmly believed by all those who have given attention to the subject: First—The majority of those who become religious, are the descendants of those who feared God. Those who now compose the christian churches, are not those generally who have been rescued from the haunts of open vice and profligacy; from scepticism and infidelity, or from the immediate descendants of scoffers, drunkards or blasphemers. Such men generally tread in the footsteps of their fathers.

The church is chiefly composed of the descendants of those who have been true christians, and who trained their children in the way they should go. Second—It is a fact that comparatively a large proportion of the descendants of the righteous become true christians. I know that it is often said otherwise, and especially that the children of ministers are less virtuous and religious than others. But it should be remembered that such cases are more prominent than others ; that they attract attention ; and especially that the profane have a malicious pleasure in making them the subject of remark. The son of a drunkard may be a drunkard without attracting notice, for such a result is expected ; so also of an infidel or a scoffer, or a thief or a licentious man, without being the subject of special remark. It is regarded and expected as a matter of course. But when the son of an eminent christian is profane, licentious, or sceptical, it at once excites surprise, because such *is not the usual course, and is not expected* ; because a wicked world likes to triumph over the downfall of the righteous, and will often lay the snare, and afterwards glory in its success. Third—The righteous should rest on the faithfulness of God in His promises. Their faith and confidence should be strong in His design to perpetuate

religion in all the families of the faithful. They should be indefatigable in the inculcation of religious truth, walking worthy of God, and to all well-pleasing before them, and continuing instant in prayer; should so live that their children may safely follow in their footsteps, and continually look for and expect God's blessing on their efforts, and their labor will not be in vain. They shall see their children walking in the ways of virtue, and when they die and leave the world, it will be with unwavering confidence that God will not suffer His faithfulness to fail; that He will not break His covenant, nor alter the thing that hath gone out of His lips. A remark of the Rev. A. Barnes may illustrate these statements, he says: "I am acquainted with the descendants of John Rogers, the first martyr in Queen Mary's reign, of the tenth and eleventh generations. With a single exception, the oldest son in the family has been a clergyman, some of them eminently distinguished for learning and piety; and there are few families now, a greater proportion of whom are pious, than of that family."

The Secretary of the Massachusetts S. S. Society made an investigation a little while ago for the purpose of ascertaining the facts about the religious character of the families of ministers and deacons, with reference to the charge

so often made, that their sons and daughters were worse than other children. The following is the result: In 268 families there were 1756 children over fifteen years of age. Of these, 884 were hopefully pious, 794 were united in church fellowship, 61 were in the ministry, and 17 were dissipated, and only a few of these became so while living at home with their parents. In 11 of these families there are 123 children, and all but seven pious. When and where can such results be found in the families of the ungodly? indeed, it is the great law by which virtue and religion are spread and perpetuated in the world, that God is faithful to His covenant, and that He blesses the efforts of His people in endeavoring to train up generations for His service.

Our merciful Creator has not intended man for a low or ignoble being, but has formed him for honor and usefulness. We cannot be made great by others; by our ancestry, or our patrimony, by beauty of form or loftiness of stature; nor does rank, however exalted or dazzling, impart greatness to man. Mental imbecility and meanness of character may roam in a palace and strut in magnificent titles and robes. Wealth does not yield greatness. The owner of riches has frequently been their slave, numbered among narrow and bitter spirits, boast-

ing of treasures he had not the power to use, nor qualification to enjoy. True greatness is greatness in the sight of the Lord, and this is found only in devotedness to Him. When religion is supreme in the heart, her dominion pervades all the faculties of the entire man. That part of man's nature which recognizes law and duty is the noblest and most important, and when rightly educated and in the ascendant, his intellectual and emotional powers are enlarged and tranquilized; the love of Christ—the most expansive of all affections;—the glory of God—the sublimest of all contemplations,—become the principles of action, and tend to raise the character to that grandeur of which these elements form the basis and the inspiration.

Righteousness is true greatness, goodness is power, and wisdom is better than strength. It is said of the Baptist that one great preparation for his extraordinary eminence and usefulness, was special abstemiousness and self-control—"He shall drink neither wine nor strong drink." Self-mastery lies at the basis of noble distinction. A preacher of repentance and self-government, he himself was a pattern of religious mortification and hardihood. With what severity, with what exalted sanctity, he stood before Herod, reproving him for all the evils

which he did. What is the distinction of the warrior to the magnanimity of virtue, and a soul inspired by the in-dwelling of the Holy Ghost? To what a littleness man dwindleth, and how paltry his pursuits and conquests, in the exclusion of religion, and of the momentous things of eternity. How little, in the last day, will be the names of an Alexander, a Cæsar, a Napoleon, and a Nelson, compared to a Coke, a Carey, a Williams and a Hunt, and many others, now unknown to fame.

Think of Paul, probably the greatest human name in all history. By his writings he is to-day influencing more minds and hearts than any other man that ever lived. See those three young men, the Baptist, the apostle Paul, and Timothy, all descendants of a pious ancestry; early taught the holy scriptures with all the sacredness and sanctities of revealed religion: distinguished men, shall we say representative men, of New Testament faith and practice, the epitomes of whose noble lives are contained in a few significant words which have no parallel, except in the book of life. Of John it is said that "he was a burning and shining light;" of Timothy, "I have no man likeminded;" of Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith." The influence of a holy example is salutary in all the stations of

public and private life. Such goodness is powerful everywhere—in the circles of royalty, in the councils of war, in the treaties of peace, in discernment and warning, in the world and in the church, at home and abroad.

What a beautiful description of patriarchal piety and parental affection and esteem we have in the character and conduct of Joseph, as revealed upon the several occasions of his brethren's visits to him in Egypt. When Joseph was sold into Egypt, mature age had fixed the stature and formed the features of his brethren, so that the lapse of years had effected no great change in their character and appearance than what he had always seen them; whilst he himself had grown out of the stripling into the man, and from a shepherd's boy was become the ruler of a kingdom. When they, therefore, appeared before him, he knew them, but they knew him not. He listened to their artless account of home with suppressed emotion, while they told of the family and circumstances in which his own name and that of his father's were so deeply involved. (Gen. xlii., 24; xliii., 7.) "Is your father yet alive, and have you another brother?" They went down a second time and again the question was, "Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake, is he yet alive?" More he could not venture to

ask, while he was yet in his disguise. But at the pleading of Judah on the behalf of Benjamin, Joseph's firmness forsook him, so that he could not refrain himself any longer, and, causing every man to go out, he made himself known to his brethren. Then, in the height of the paroxysm which came upon him (for he wept aloud, so that the Egyptians heard), still his first words, uttered from the fullness of his heart, were : "Doth my father yet live?" He now bids them hasten and bring the old man down, bearing to him tokens of his love and tidings of his glory. On his arrival in the country he goes to meet him. (Gen. xlvi., 29.) He presents himself unto him, and falls and weeps on his neck ; he provides for him and his household out of the fat of the land ; he sets him before Pharoah. By-and-by he hears that he is sick and hastens to visit him, he receives his blessing, watches his deathbed, embalms his body, mourns for him three-score and ten days, and then carries him into Canaan to bury him, taking with him, as an escort to do him honor, all the elders of Israel and all the servants of Pharoah, and all his house and the house of his brethren, chariots and horsemen—a very great company.

Many of our young people are fond of novel-reading. Let such take and read ten or twelve

of the last chapters of Genesis ; those containing the history of Joseph, where the romance of real life is portrayed in events and circumstances so artless and simple, so fascinating and pure, so rich and so elevating, as to have no comparison in the realm of novel literature. Although the programme of events of life may be beyond the power of imitation, yet, when read, such is the divine sublimity inspiring the whole, that the entire story reads as if intensified with thoughts that breathe and words that burn.

“ He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty ; because thou hast made the Lord, even the Most High, thy habitation. There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him : I will set him on high, because he hath known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him ; I will be with him in trouble ; I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him My salvation.”

These cheering declarations evidently secure to us God’s gracious benedictions, as the result of our domestic acknowledgment to His government and will.

The peace and welfare of the domestic circle will, too, be greatly promoted. The man that takes delight in the stated inculcation of God's holy word, and the habit of religious worship in his family, must necessarily be attended with results in the highest degree blissful and satisfactory ; his leaf shall not wither, his religious life shall not become stale and uninfluential, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. Correct ideas of God and of religious truth will be obtained, by which the younger members of the family may be admonished and directed ; a powerful check will be unceasingly presented against the commission of much that is evil : whilst just in proportion as the influences of religion are diffused throughout the social circle, so will all that creates disquietude and discord die away ; envy and strife will cease, and our families, yielding to the force of heavenly truth, will pleasingly attest :

Sweet peace she brings wherever she arrives,
She builds our comfort as she forms our lives,
Lays the rough path of peevish nature even,
And opens in the breast a little heaven.

CHAPTER XI.

IMPORTANT TESTIMONIES OF DISTINGUISHED MEN WHO HAVE GIVEN ATTENTION TO THE SUBJECT.

The late Rev. John Angel James remarks : “ There is, in some households, no family government, no order, no subordination. The children are kept under no restraint, but are allowed to do what they like ; their faults are unnoticed and unpunished, and their tempers are allowed to grow wild and headstrong, till, in fact, the whole family becomes utterly lawless, rebellious against parental authority, and unamiable to all around. How many have had to curse the over-indulgence of fond and foolish parents ? How many, as they have ruminated amidst the desolations of poverty, or the walls of a prison, have exclaimed : ‘ Oh, my over-fond parents, had you exercised that authority with which God intrusted you over your children, and had you checked my childish corruptions, and punished my boyish disobedience, had you subjected me to the restraint of salutary and wholesome laws, I had not brought you with a broken heart to your grave, nor myself with a ruined character to the jail.’ ”

It is not uncommon for parents to treat the first acts of puerile rebellion rather as freaks to be laughed at, than as faults to be reformed. Oh, says the mother, it's only play, he will know better soon; he does not mean any harm; I cannot chide him. No; and if the father, wiser than herself, does, she cries, and, perhaps, in the hearing of her child, reproves her husband for cruelty. From whatever cause it proceeds, it is in the highest degree injurious to the character of children. Let those who are guilty of it read the fearful comment upon this sin, which is furnished for their warning in the history of Eli and his family.

The late Rev. Dr. Stamp says on the subject: "What we are as families, such also will our neighborhood be; all our attempts to promote the well-being of society around us will assuredly prove futile, if the religious culture of our respective households be unhappily neglected. Were family religion universal, could we find in every house an altar unto God, the stream of general society, thus purified at its source, would exhibit a striking contrast to its present ruffled and muddy aspect. The burstings forth of strife, the tumult of unholy passion, with all that proves the bane of social enjoyment, would cease to vex; whilst under

the hallowing influence of truth, the peace of communities would be as a river, and their righteousness as the waves of the sea. Just as the duties of domestic worship are recognized and carried out, is the much-to-be-desired consummation hastened."

The late Rev. Dr. Olin, of the United States, observes: "The family institution is a divine ordinance, obviously designed as a preparatory school for such a training of childhood as shall best fit it for the reception of religious truth and the performance of religious duties. It is a period of physical weakness and absolute dependence upon the parent, when the heart is impressable and the mind plastic; when the powers of imitation are strong and active; and when unlimited confidence is reposed in the truth and propriety of parental inculcations. Over this period of human life, the laws of society, no less than the laws of heaven, make the parents' authority supreme. * * * * Almost everything depends on preoccupying the soul with right habits, of which none is so closely connected with favorable religious development as the habit of obedience to legitimate authority. Every parent who fails of establishing this unquestionable dominion over his child, does in the same degree entail upon him a curse of

fearful omen. He fosters the unborn enmity of the heart to the claims of religion ; and so strengthens its opposition to the government of God, that the usual agencies of the gospel are very likely to prove ineffectual for the great end of piety and salvation. That this direction of parental faithfulness is one of the most common, as well as inveterate, hindrances to conversion, all experience and observation offer their concurrent testimony. It may be laid down as a Christian axiom, that the rebellious spirit which refuses obedience to parents, will be the last to render it to God."

Utterances like these on the importance of domestic religion might be multiplied, if necessary, but we forbear. There is a case of individual character containing points of interest which may be both instructive and encouraging to those who, like Joshua, have resolved, that whatever others may do, as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.

I remember, many years ago, a youth belonging to a religious family in the country, coming to take his place as an indoor apprentice in connection with city life. The principals of his new home were professedly Baptists, but made little or no pretension to religion beyond going occasionally to a place of public worship on the Sabbath day. On the Sabbath it was

his duty to be at his parental home. There was no religious element either in the house or shop, so that they all had their conversation in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. By the influence of outside associations he was brought to see the error of his ways, and eventually to be converted from them. This soon developed itself in newness of life and character. As usual, the secret of it was mistaken by his shopmates, hence a continuous pelting storm of petty persecution; in place of the civilities and socialities of life, there was an unbroken tirade of coarseness and the low vulgarities of unreasonable and wicked men, the master himself sometimes joining with them.

To live a religious life under such circumstances would be considered almost impracticable, but the grace of God was sufficient, and better days were in store for him. One day when the master and he were alone, he summoned courage to ask him for an explanation of the unseemly treatment to which he was almost daily subjected. It was quite evident it was more than the master expected, as he could make no explanation, nor yet plead innocence on his own part, or ignorance in that of others. He frankly acknowledged the justness of the complaint made to him, at the

same time promising immediate reformation. A new era now set in, hostilities at once ceased. A large family pew was rented in church, while, very shortly after, the master and other members of the family united in church fellowship. Family prayer twice a day was now established, at which all hands were required to attend, the youthful hero leading the way. Rough places were now made even; motives being pure, actions were peaceable; they, in turn, by love served one another, rejoicing not in iniquity, but rejoicing in the truth.

In the course of time the young man commenced housekeeping on his own account, where he had his family altar, around which he and his devoted wife have trained a large family. In this respect, God has been very gracious to them: out of twelve of a family, ten have been spared to man and womanhood; the whole are members of the christian church, also the partners of those that are married. Two of them are employed in the work of the christian ministry.

He that was "young" is now old, at least apparently so.

"He lives long who answers life's great end."

He has had to endure a severe period of long-suffering, which covered a large portion

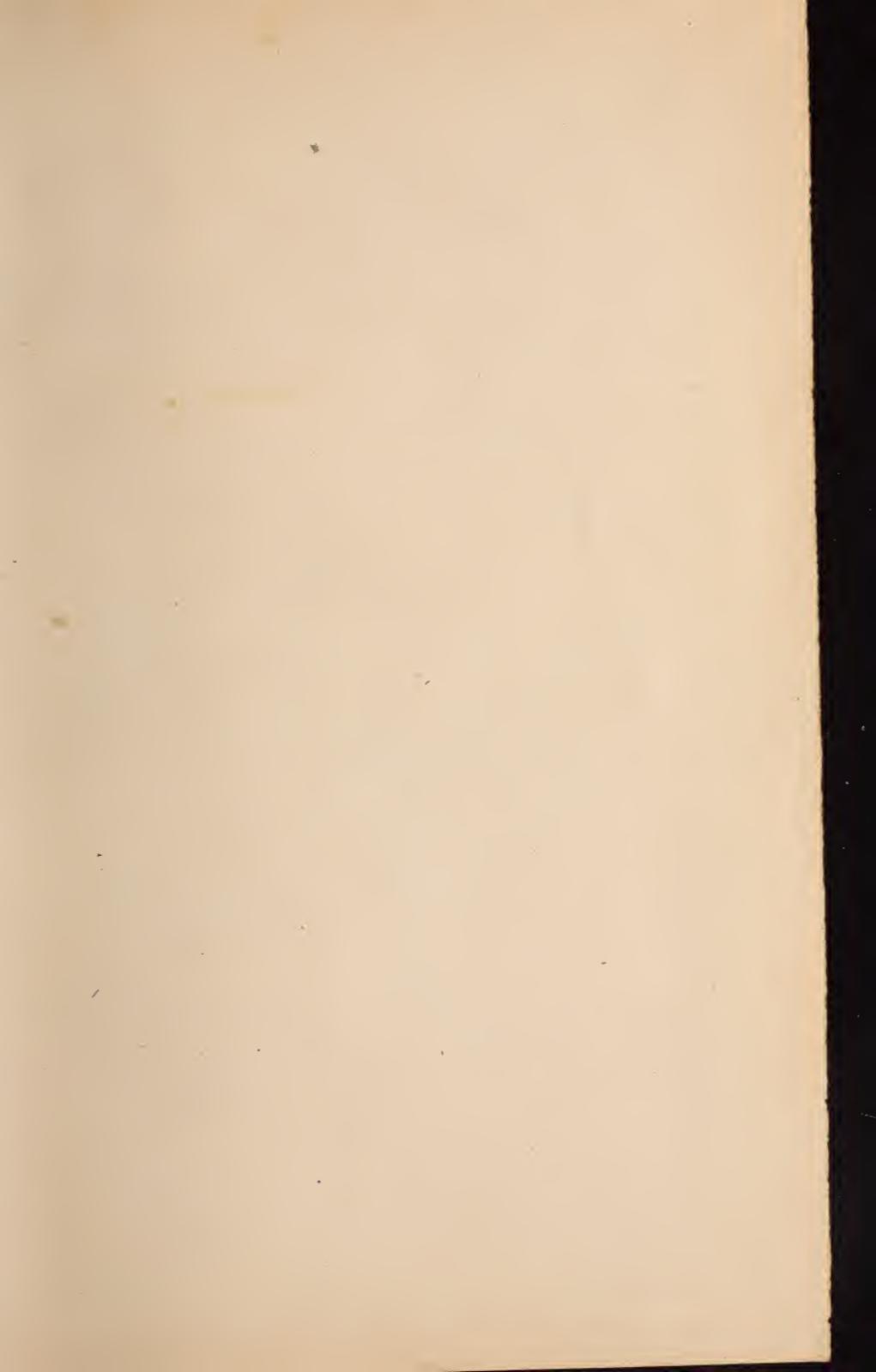
of the latter part of his active life with a cloud. Otherwise, as a local preacher, class-leader, Sabbath school teacher, and Sunday school superintendent, he was indefatigable, and never could feel that he had done enough so long as he knew anything remained to be done. For some time he has been anxiously, yet patiently, waiting and watching on the margin of the river. In reviewing the past, he is painfully sensible of many defects of religious character, and if not for the revelation of the mercy of God in the sacrifice of His Son, he might despair of any deliverance from their terrible consequences. But this is the only hope he has, no other he needs, and with a full and bounding heart he sings,

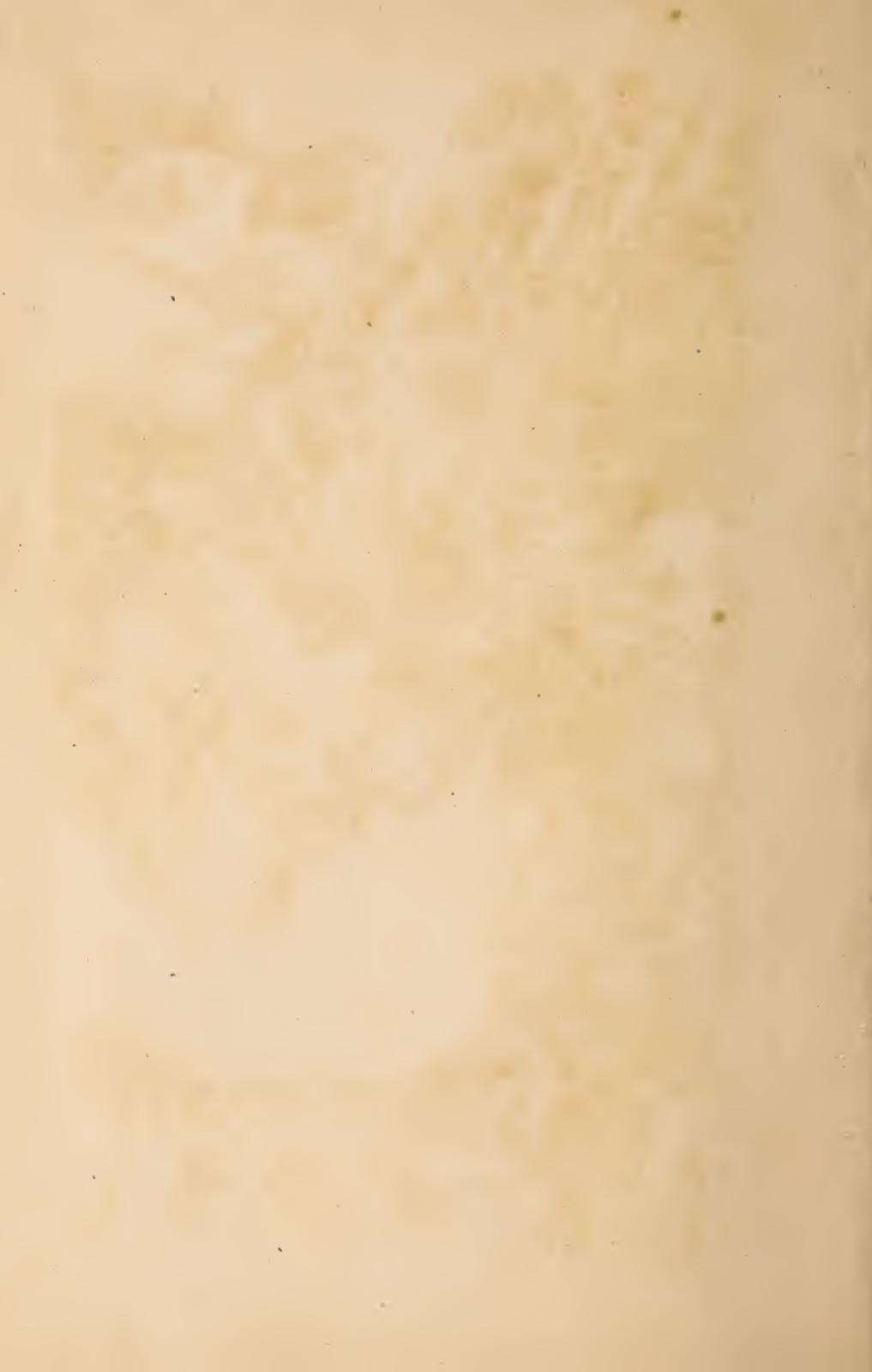
O love, thou bottomless abyss,
My sins are swallowed up in thee.

The representations thus given, as to the reasons on which the duties of family religion are based, the mode of its celebration, and the advantages which its observance secures, we now commit to your serious and prayerful deliberation. If matters thus important be unhappily lost sight of, you cannot complain should your children or your servants be heed-

less of the word they never heard, or wanderers from Him whom they have not been trained to worship. Where there is no praying be well assured there will be sin. Where God is not served, Satan will be. Shall then, a responsibility thus fearful lie at your door? Shall your very habitation witness before God against you? "Shall the stone cry out of the walls, and the beam out of the timber answer it," that in your dwellings God is dishonored and His worship not known? "Have I been a wilderness unto you," appeals Jehovah, "a land of darkness, that ye come no more to Me? What iniquity have your fathers found in Me, that they are gone far from Me, and have walked after vanity and become vain?" Difficulties may indeed present themselves; members of your own families may oppose in this respect your righteous intentions; grievous scenes of this kind may have frequently been witnessed, still let Joshua's determination be resolutely yours. In your family, fear and worship God, and if your children perish (which God forbid), O, ye christian parents, let not the fault be yours. Let not your offspring, or your servant, if found at the last at the left hand of the Judge, have to say, "My father never prayed;" "My master never instructed me in the things of God." Let not your household

perish in consequence of your neglect. Train them up aright, instruct them in God's truth and fear, commit them by daily and earnest prayer to Him, so shall you hasten the accomplishment of that prophetic word: "Then shall the offering of Jacob and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord as in the days of old, and, as in former years, the Lord will create upon every dwelling place in Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence."





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